Jane Austen Society

COLLECTED REPORTS
1996 – 2000

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Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society 1996 – 2000

Index 1949 – 2000

The Jane Austen Society

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Preface

Each of the four earlier volumes of *Collected Reports* covered a span of ten years, since it was considered that this constituted both a suitably rounded number of issues and a conveniently sized paperback book. Over the last decade, however, the *Reports* have grown considerably in size, to the extent that it is no longer possible to include ten in a single volume. In future, therefore, the *Collected Reports* will appear at five-yearly intervals.

As in the first four volumes, the individual *Reports* are reproduced in their entirety, except for the Society's Annual Accounts, which as before have been omitted. As well as articles concerning the Austen family, their circle and descendants, and matters connected with Jane Austen's writing, they provide information about the Society's proceedings. They contain lists of officers and members of the Committee, the Chairman's notes, the account of the AGM (and the full text of the Address delivered at it) and news from Branches and Groups. This is as it should be, since the history of the Society is inextricably bound up with the development of research into Jane Austen, and indeed might be said to be a part of it.

This volume contains a cumulative Index for all five *Collected Reports*, thus covering every year from 1949 to 2000. It is detailed, comprehensive and extensively cross-referenced and replaces the rather brief indexes included in each of the separate volumes. This will greatly increase the ease with which information can be obtained from the *Reports*, thereby making them an even more useful source of reference for the many scholars who have recourse to them. It is intended that each further five-year collection will have its own similar Index.

We are very grateful to Audrey Judkins for the preparation of the Index, to Deirdre Le Faye for her scholarly advice and to Helen Lefroy and Lesley Wilson for their work on the production of this volume.

David Selwyn

The Jane Austen Society



HMS *Canopus*
(By courtesy of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust)

Report for 1996

The Jane Austen Society

Founded in 1940 by Miss Dorothy Darnell
Registered Charity No. 1040613

President Mr Richard Knight

Vice-Presidents Miss Elizabeth Jenkins, OBE, Nancy Lady Smiley

Chairman Mr Brian Southam *Vice-Chairman* Mr Alwyn Austen

Hon. Treasurer Mr Crispin Drummond

Hon. Secretary Mrs Susan McCartan, Carton House, Redwood Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5PE (telephone 01420 562469)

Committee Miss Jean Bowden, Mr Christopher Jarman, Mrs Gaye King, Ms Maggie Lane, Miss Deirdre Le Faye, Miss Helen Lefroy, Mrs Louise Ross, Mrs Diana Shervington, Mr Anthony Tilke Mr and Mrs A.G.C. Trollope, co-opted, Mr William Ramsay

Membership Secretary and database Mrs Rosemary Culley, 22 Belmont Grove, Havant PO9 3PU (e.mail rosemary @ sndc.demon.co.uk)

Accountants to the Society Messrs Sheen Stickland & Co, Alton

Contributions to the Report are welcome. They should be not more than 2,600 words, and should be based on original research into the life and times of Jane Austen, her family and friends, or places known to her.

Subscriptions paid annually are due on 1st of January

	UK	*overseas*
Individual	£10	£12
Joint	£15	£18
Corporate	£30	£33

Life membership: UK £150; overseas £180

Cheques should be sent to the Membership Secretary at the address above, or through bank giro credit to the Jane Austen Society, Lloyds Bank plc, 40 High Street, Alton GU34 1BQ (account no. 0097714, sort code 30-90-15).

Members resident abroad are asked to pay subscriptions in sterling by means of a banker's draft. The Society is unable to accept payment by credit card.

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From the Chairman

The last twelve months have seen the public world of Jane Austen in minor uproar, with a spate of films, programmes on radio and television, countless interviews and articles, some of them solid and sensible but most of them journalistic and plain silly. However, from the Society's perspective, the real world of Jane Austen is in good hands and good shape. Members will know this from recent AGMs when we have heard from Sandy Lerner and our President of the measures which are being taken to return Chawton House and its grounds to the state in which Jane Austen would have known them. The news is equally reassuring from Chawton Cottage, where the greatest care is being taken to ensure that both the fabric of the building – under severe strain from the hordes of visitors – and its decorative condition are maintained to the very highest standards. Moreover, skilled conservation work is being carried out on the many precious and delicate exhibits, and the level of security is correspondingly high, as it should be for a museum of international importance housed within Jane Austen's last home.

It can be said that the Society, too, is taking the proper steps to safeguard its heritage, the tradition of love and respect for Jane Austen which is our inheritance from the Society's founders and those who carried on their work in the difficult years immediately following the War. The Society's recent edition of the *Collected Poems and Verse of the Austen Family* expresses this very well; and we are looking forward to the next volume of *Collected Reports,* covering the years 1986-1995. Together, these books carry forward our endeavour, on the one hand to raise the level of Jane Austen scholarship, and on the other to widen the love and understanding of her work.

A further development has been in our organization of conferences: in November 1996 a conference in London on the subject of 'Jane Austen and Biography' (very timely, with no less than three biographies to be published in the course of this year); fast approaching, a residential conference in Oxford; and, in the autumn, a second London conference, treating 'Jane Austen in the 1990s'.

As to what lies ahead, in company with Shakespeare, Jane Austen will no doubt be swept up in the Millennium celebrations (already far advanced in planning). Let us hope that the Society is able to play its part in all this – curbing the excesses, speaking out for our traditions and encouraging the younger generation to open themselves to her wit and sense of life. Above all, to read the novels!

March 1997 BRIAN SOUTHAM.

The Annual General Meeting

The President, Mr Richard Knight, welcomed 300 members to the morning business session. The Chairman reported a successful year for the Society. A much wider public had become acquainted with Jane Austen's novels through the four recent film adaptations although some verisimilitude had inevitably been lost.

The Honorary Secretary outlined progress made during the past two years in verifying members' status, and in trying to re-establish contact with pre-1985 life members. 167 had not yet responded. 326 new members were welcomed during the last eighteen months, 35 from overseas. With the subtraction of those claimed by mortality, some who had failed to renew their subscription or had moved leaving no forwarding address, the database indicated a total of 2072 members. Mrs Rosemary Culley has assumed the post of membership secretary. The Society is featured on Internet, and can be reached by e-mail.

The Honorary Secretary thanked members who had written to her during the year, and those who had offered tangible help in promoting the Society's publications and for providing displays at the AGM.

The Honorary Treasurer reported a satisfactory year, reflected in the accounts published in the Report for 1995.

The afternoon session, attended by about 700 members and guests, was opened by the President, who extended a special welcome to Ms Susan Maher, Director of the Centre for the Study of Early English Women's Writing, and Mr Kit Kaufman, solicitor for the Centre, who brought Ms Lerner's good wishes. An outline of progress in planning the restoration of Chawton House and Park for the Centre was given.

The President then introduced the speaker, Mr Paul Johnson. A vote of thanks proposed by Professor Edward Copeland of Pomona College, California, was warmly supported by the audience. Tea for 470 was served in the grounds of the park on a beautiful July day. Commemorative Evensong was conducted by the Revd Ken Kelland in St Nicholas' Church. The day's success was underwritten by unstinting support from William Ramsay and members of the Southern Circle.

SUSAN McCARTAN

Dame Veronica Wedgwood, OM, DBE, FBA, 1010-1997

The Society learnt with regret of the death in March of the eminent historian of the 17th century, author of The Thurty Years War (1938), William the Silent (1944), and many more books. She gave time, too, to public service: the Arts Council, the National Gallery, and as President of the International PEN Club in London, 1951-57. In 1966 we were privileged to have Dame Veronica to address the AGM, on 'Jane Austen and the Tragic Muse'.

News from ....

Jane Austen's House, 1996/97

As expected, the world-wide enthusiasm for Jane Austen and her works continued throughout 1996; we had 57,400 visitors, more than double the number for 1995. It seemed wise to have the House checked for possible structural deterioration, but thankfully everything is in good order, and apart from some work on the roof valley gutters, only routine redecoration was needed. The Drawing Room, Garden Vestibule, the stairs and top corridor were repainted and papered during January and February 1997, when we just *had* to close on weekdays although we were open and very busy at weekends. We took the opportunity of the general upheaval to install new electric storage heaters, and a discreet television surveillance system – sadly necessary these days. We also spent the last two weeks of February re-labelling the entire collection, with the aid of our computer and laminating machine. Meantime, archival photography has been an ongoing task, and soon every object will have been re-photographed with modern equipment, in such a way that we will be able to provide prints or slides, in colour or black and white, for any purpose. At long last, the contents of Jane Austen's music books known as the Chawton Collection, the property of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust, have been catalogued in great detail, by Derek McCulloch and Ian Gammie. *Jane Austen's music* is on sale at Jane Austen's House (£6.50, plus 70p by post).

Also, the Jane Austen Memorial Trust, in collaboration with Miriam Hart of Ohio University, has had the whole music collection microfilmed, thus eliminating any need to photograph the originals. Tape recordings and CDs soon followed, and are also on sale at Chawton. They attracted the attention of the radio station, Classic FM, and Margaret Howard came to interview us for a 1½ hour programme on the music which Jane Austen used to play.

I have revised our Guidebook; it has been enlarged and re-designed, with some new text illustrations but it still costs only £1!

To ease the flow of visitors in the House at Bank Holidays we had a timed ticket system. They only had to wait about ten minutes; to amuse them meanwhile we put up temporary exhibits in the Granary. We also arranged several performances by the actresses Judith French and Rebecca Blech, and the Windsor Box and Fir Company quartet played music from Jane Austen's own music books on period instruments, including a 1795 square piano.

Tom Carpenter and I have been involved in 33 television and radio interviews, not only for audiences in this country but for America, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Holland, Italy, Norway, and Sweden. Soon after the première of 'S & S', GMTV came to do a live programme from Jane Austen's House, on 21 February 1996 – a very cold snowy day – and the whole of Britain was treated to a highspeed tour of the House by their senior presenter, Sue Saville (though the Welsh oil-spill story took much of the other satellite transmission time). The TV programme, BBC Breakfast News Extra, presented by Liz MacKean, also transmitted its entire programme live from the House on 21 December.

During the summer of 1996 two members of the cast of the Chichester Festival Theatre's production of *'Mansfield Park'* Lisa Goddard (Lady Bertram) and Lucy Scott (Fanny Price), paid us a delightful visit. Also Sue Birtwistle (producer of the TV version of *P &P* and Susie Conklin (script editor) came to the House for a book-signing session, and were interviewed on local radio.

In September our staff were invited to a reception at Winchester Castle's Great Hall to see the première of the film of *Emma*. But before setting off we hosted two coach parties arranged by London's *Evening Standard*; they called to see the House before driving on to the reception.

In October I attended the JASNA Conference at Richmond, Virginia, and was able to report that the Trust has had Jane Austen's donkey carriage inspected by the Head Carriage Restorer to Her Majesty the Queen. Although the wheels need some restoration work the rest should be carefully cleaned and then treated with a special varnish. Generous contributions received from JASNA members have been set aside to pay for the work.

JEAN K. BOWDEN

JANE AUSTEN'S HOUSE

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17th-century house where Jane Austen lived from 1909 to 1817

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THE HOUSE IS OPEN: 11-4.30 daily 1 March – 31 December
January and February: Saturday and Sunday
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. . . *Branches*

Compiled by Gaye King

Bath and Bristol

In May we were treated to a talk by Joy Minnis on 'Health in the Time of Jane Austen' at the old Royal Mineral Water Hospital in Bath which has treated patients by hydrotherapy from Georgian times to the present.

Another most enjoyable summer event combined the picnic theme in *Emma* with the walk in *Northanger Abbey* when we met on the top of Beechen Cliff to admire the view, consume strawberries and cream and play a variety of puzzling and rhyming word games devised by David Selwyn, based on the Austens' own pastimes.

A series of informal discussion groups in private houses was successfully launched with meetings on *Sense and Sensibility* in the summer and *Pride and Prejudice* in the autumn.

New Year got off to a very good start with the ever-enjoyable 'Cassandra's Tea Party' at 4 Sydney Place, by kind permission of Anne and Michael Davis. Michael told us about his plans for the house, and his research into its history. A splendid tea was provided by Anne Davis, Louise Ross and Edward and Alice Howells.

MAGGIE LANE

Birmingham

On 1 June 45 people attended the day school on 'Perspectives upon Jane Austen' at Winterbourne House, University of Birmingham's School for Continuing Studies.

The Study Day entitles 'Jane Austen and other social commentators of her time' at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on 9 November attracted 150 people. Bridget Pugh, with her usual eloquence and insight, spoke on 'Novel wri ting before Jane Austen', Tim Mowl, architectural historian, on 'Jane Austen and the Picturesque Sensibility: Irony and architecture around Bath', Victor Lucas, 'In search of Jane Austen: Contemporary illustrations of Jane Austen's world', and Sheila Shreeve, 'Costume in the world of Jane Austen'.

JULIE SHORLAND

Hampshire

April 20 and May 25, Dom Nicholas Seymour, OSB, lead meetings at Alton Abbey to discuss 'The Horrid Adventures of Catherine Morland: Levels of irony in *Northanger Abbey*'. Miss Morland, innocent and artless, is delivered from the moral corruption of her Bah acquaintances by her independence of mind. although denied the gothic horror at Northanger Abbey which she had anticipated, the irony is forsaken when General Tilney behaves in a despotic manner and peremptorily expels the heroine. throughout her adventures Miss Morland maintains her personal dignity. the talks were followed by tea and a stroll round the gardens.

SUSAN MCCARTAN

Isle of Wight

The second meeting of this new branch met in January to read and discuss passages from Mansfield Park and Persuasion. An Austen descendant, Mr D. Bradford, presented us with a copy of his family tree.

Elizabeth Dennis

Kent

40 people attended the AGM and Study Day held at Godmersham Park on 3 March. Deirdre Le Faye spoke on 'The Letters' and Robert Williams on 'Jane Austen and Landscape and Gardens'. Lunch and tea were served in the Orangery.

On 23 June The Lord and Lady FitzWalter invited us to picnic in the lovely gardens of Goodnestone Park, and to see a display of costumes from TV adaptations of the novels. Maggie Lane gave a talk and Judith French performances of 'My Solitary Elegance'.

The dedication of a garden seat in memory of our first patron, Sir David Waldron Smithers, took place at Godmersham Park on 7 September.

37 members and their guests came to Godmersham Park on 15 November for the Annual Dinner. Our guests were Professor and Mrs Edward Copeland.

AUDREY COCKSHUTT

London

The main event of our year was the Study Day in November organised with the University of London Centre for English Studies in collaboration with the London Group and attended by about 70 people. Aspects of Jane Austen's biography were discussed by Deirdre Le Faye, David Nokes, and by Ed Copeland who deputised for Brian Southam. Professor Copeland's researches into the account books of a Basingstoke furniture-maker Ring Bros., illustrated the product choices available and prices paid by the Revd George Austen and the more wealthy landowners in North Hampshire.

At the Birthday Dinner in December the fare was similar to that Jane Austen herself might have eaten at hte New Cavendish Club. In Brian Southam's talk he suggested that the recent plethora of films might even send us back to the novels. We are sorry to have to part with Maggie Black as secretary, owing to her other commitments and uncertain health. She has organised nearly all of our group's activities for the past four years and will be much missed.

ALLAN WILKINSON

Midlands

The AGM and Study Day at Keele University were most successful, With over 80 people attending the conference. Speaking on 'Aspects of *Persuasion'*, Professor Gary Kelly, Wendy Craik and John Levitt were both entertaining and informative, their lectures provoking lively discussion from the floor.

We were invited to Sandon Hall, the home of the Earls of Harrowby, for a

strawberry tea on 23 June, a guided tour of the splendid house and leisurely stroll through the gardens and extensive grounds.

After two years 'on tour' for our autumn meeting, we returned to Keele for a study weekend. Bill Hutchings looked at books and reading as a recurring theme in *Persuasion;* Mary Bonwick, on 'Sibling Rivalry and Sisterhood' took aspects of the work usually neglected in favour of the more obvious romantic tensions; and Tamar Hodes, on 'Body, Language and Body Language' found a third way of looking at the text which complemented the others very well. Roy Shipperbottom fascinated us all with his immense erudition on cookery books of the period. In Keele Hall we enjoyed an evening of readings, games, cards and conversation by candlelight. We rounded off the weekend with a visit to Tabley Hall, near Knutsford, a delightful Palladian mansion which would have marvellously enhanced all the recent Jane Austen adaptations if the programme makers had only known about it!

We returned to the 'Bishop's Palace', Lichfield, for the Birthday Dinner on 15 December. A record number of guests were welcomed in from the frost to a warming fire and mulled wine. The Liebeck Quartet chose music of the period for after-dinner entertainment.

DAWN THOMAS

Oxford

On a lovely day in June a group of 30 members gathered at Stoneleigh Abbey for a view of the house and a picnic in the grounds. Mavis Batey introduced the tour and gave a fascinating lecture with slides, which explained the connection of Stoneleigh with the Austen family and with the novels and Repton's influence in the design of the Park.

In September a smaller group met at Anne Kiggels house for tea and a discussion of the Austen texts.

The 40 members who attended the annual Study Day at St Hilda's College, Oxford, were treated to Marilyn Butler's stimulating talk on anthropological aspects of the novels. This was followed by some fascinating insights, into Jane Austen's experience of contemporary visual arts by Gillian Salway.

ANNE-MARIE PALMER

Southern Circle

In the Granary at Chawton in the Spring the group discussed 'Parents, Real and fictional'.

On 2nd November we met at Bookham in Surrey to hear and discuss members' views on writers who influenced Jane Austen.

BILL RAMSAY

The Jane Austen Society of North America (JASNA)



George Tucker *Brian Southam*

Beautiful fall weather, historic houses and Confederate monuments formed the background of a discussion of 'Jane Austen and her men' by more than 500 of our members gathered in Richmond, Virginia, for the first weekend in October.

The conference opened formally on Friday afternoon with a welcome by Garnet Bass who retired as our president after four years' service. During the evening George Holbert Tucker and Irene Collins discussed Jane Austen and told us how they came to know and admire her work.

A keynote address by Brian Southam, a variety of breakout sessions by academics and enthusiasts, and a performance of 'Sir Charles Grandison' highlighted Saturday's activities.

Mr Southam, who is credited with identifying Jane Austen's 'Sir Charles Grandison' as a play she authored rather than a transcription of the book, described how the mystery of the manuscript was solved. While at university in the 1950s he came across a reference to the play in a book by Constance Hill (*Jane Austen: Her homes and her friends,* 1902). Anna's daughter Fanny Caroline is there quoted as saying a manuscript existed. But eminent authorities such as Dr R.W. Chapman and Lord David Cecil, had no knowledge of it, and Mr Southam dropped his enquiries. However in 1977 he received a call from Sotheby's. A manuscript play had been sent to them that was thought to be authored by Anna Lefroy, Jane's niece. Helen Lefroy confirmed that after the death of Louie Lefroy, Anna's grand-daughter, the notebook containing the play had been found in a cupboard and handed over to the Austen family to whom it had been bequeathed. Brian Southam said early pages in the 53-page MSS are written in Jane's childish hand, while later pages are written in her adult style. *Sir Charles Grandison*, Samuel Richardson's long novel, was important for Jane Austen's development as a writer: her Juvenilia is sprinkled with jokes from Richardson.

The MSS, approximately 6 x 4 inches, was on display, having been loaned by Sandy Lerner, owner of Chawton House.

'*Sanditon*: The new direction?' is the theme for this year's AGM, 3-5 October, in San Francisco. Reginald Hill, the British mystery writer and admirer of Jane

Austen, will deliver the keynote speech. On Saturday there will be a banquet followed by a ball – *en costume*. Special tours through the Napa Valley and other places of interest will be arranged.

Space is limited to the first 600 who apply, so do register early. Conference coordinator is Anita Gillespie, 601 Van Ness Avenue, No. 11, San Francisco, CA 9410, gillespiea@usfca .edu .

PAULA STEPANKOWSKY

The Jane Austen Society of Australia

Melbourne

With burgeoning interest in Jane Austen our Group has grown considerably. We have had a most successful year, and interesting speakers at our meetings: we heard about Jane Austen and the Navy, and the theatre; *Emma* we have discussed; and Professor Grave spoke on Jane Austen from the German point of view. He and his wife have translated all the novels into German.

90 of us enjoyed the Jane Austen 'Fest' in November – a full day of entertainment, readings, acting and dancing.

We have a full programme for 1997, and our journal, *Observations*, edited by our President Carla Hawley, will be launched.

MARJORIE MARRIS, 58 Holyrood Street, Hampton, Vic 3188

Sydney

We doubled our membership in 1996 to 470 – drawn from all States. Following release of the film and TV versions of the novels the committee has been inundated with attention and requests from the media for information on Jane Austen and on the Society also.

The year began with a change. After seven years as President and having founded our Society, Nora Walker handed over the reins to Susannah Fullerton, our new President.

Our programme in 1996 included excellent and stimulating talks, a discussion weekend in Kangaroo Valley, a notably popular day to discuss Jane Austen in Bath, and a weekend conference on 'The art of Jane Austen'.

Plans for 1997 include a day conference in Sydney on 2 August to discuss *Mansfield Park*. On 18 October the theme of the meeting is 'Jane Austen and Lord Byron'. At the Christmas Lunch and Birthday Celebration on 13 December Sandy Lerner will explain her plans for Chawton House and the Centre for the Study of Early English Women's Writing.

We would be delighted to hear from any members from overseas who are planning a visit to Australia . You would receive a warm welcome at our meetings

Jane Austen's School days

Jane Austen had two spells of formal education away from home: in Oxford and Southampton April -September 1783, and at Reading Ladies Boarding School July 1785 – December 1786. These occurred because Cassandra had spent some time at the home of her uncle in Bath, the Revd Dr Edward Cooper, to be with his daughter Jane Cooper[1]. When the girls were 10 and nearly 12 respectively, their families agreed for them to be privately tutored together.

The tutor chosen was Dr Cooper's sister, Mrs Ann Cawley (1735-87) in Oxford, remembered for her stiff manners. In 1758 she had married the older Dr Ralph Cawley (1721-77), a clergyman who later became principal of Brasenose College, Oxford. The marriage was to be brief, childless and painful towards the end, as he was prodigal with his money. He became prematurely senile and incapable of controlling his dons, whose quarrels eventually required the intervention of the college Visitor.[2] It was probably these misadventures which made her very different from her cheerful and easy-going Cooper relatives and less sympathetic towards children.

Jane Austen, it seems, was not at first included in this plan, but made such a fuss that in the end she was allowed to go to Oxford. Her niece Anna Lefroy later recorded Mrs Austen's light-hearted remark, 'If Cassandra's head had been going to be cut off, Jane would have her's cut off too'.[3] Such a joke, which according to Anna referred to the proposals of 1785 for Reading, makes sense only in relation to a seven-year old's determination to make up a threesome that was not compatible in age.

Contrary to the belief of some biographers, Mrs Cawley did not actually own a school,[4] but had a tutoring arrangement for which Mr Austen appears to have offered to pay £30 a year for each of his girls.[5] It lasted no longer than five months, as for some reason Mrs Cawley took her charges to Southampton, where the two Austens went down with typhus; Jane nearly died. As Mrs Cawley refused to get in touch with the respective parents , Jane Cooper took the initiative. Their mothers arrived to bring them home, but Mrs Cooper caught the fever and died in October 1783. Paid off with £10 by Mr Austen, Mrs Cawley died four years later.

The sequence of events which led to the girls' arrival at the school in Reading began when the inconsolable Dr Cooper felt he had to move well away from Bath and its memories. He went back to the Henley and Reading area where he had been born and had resided as a young man, and became rector of Sonning. His 14-year-old son Edward was entered for Eton, and he looked for a reputable school, also near at hand, for his daughter Jane. This he found in Reading Ladies Boarding School. As he was inducted to his living on Friday, 16 July 1784,[6] Jane Cooper could have joined ten days later when the new school year opened, on a Monday as was then customary.

She must have settled in well, and perhaps after the Cooper family had spent that Christmas at Steventon, it was decided that Cassandra and Jane Austen would also go to the school. To be sure, it was 25 miles away, and at least ten boarding

schools were within a 12-mile radius of Steventon[7], while parlour boarder fees of 35 guineas a year were far higher than the 15-16 guineas for ordinary boarders at Berkshire and Hampshire schools. However, Mr Austen's income was then ample to meet these fees. He had made partial repayments of a debt, first incurred in 1768, to his wealthy brother-in-law James Leigh Perrot: £152 in 1783 and £100 in 1784.[8]

The school year of 1785-6 began on Monday, 25 July, and fee payments had presumably to be made within a month after the term began. On 20 August 1785 Mr Austen therefore paid £37 19s. for the half-year, which would have included £1 1s. entrance fee for each girl.[9] It was then not uncommon to have no extras: Mrs Founteneau's school in Winchester charged 22 guineas a year to cover board, tuition, washing, gratuities, pens, paper and ink, books, music for country dances and a ticket to a ball.[10]

Formally entitled Reading Ladies Boarding School but often known by the name of its principal – Mrs La Tournelle's school – it was not called the Abbey School before 1835. It was situated in the Forbury, at one time the inner courtyard of Reading Abbey and reckoned to be the town's healthiest spot. After dissolution in 1539, the Abbey had passed into the ownership of the Crown, and the tenants-in-chief were the local landowning family, the Blagraves. The old part of the school was the Abbey gateway. Appropriately spooky to inspire young imagination, it had two vast staircases – the banisters bore traces of gilding – which led to the upper rooms.

The schoolhouse proper, built before 1725, was a commodious residence

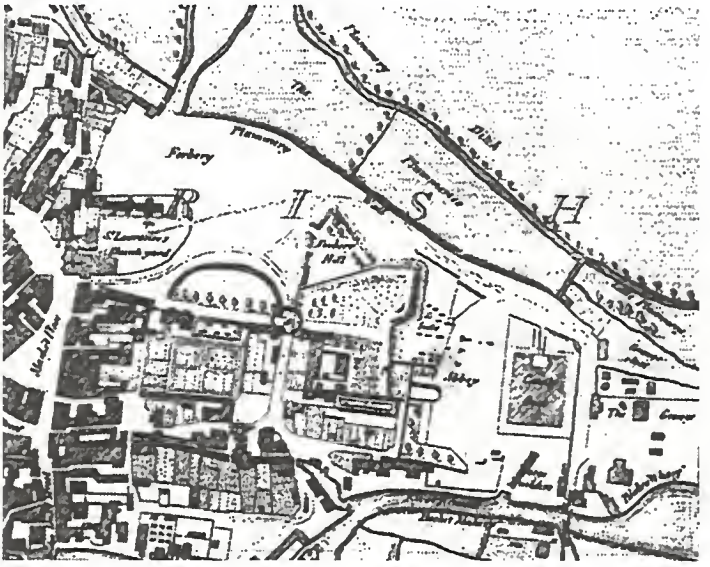


The Abbey gatehouse (1801).
The house on the left is the schoolhouse.

adjoining the gateway and over 70 feet long, on two storeys plus attics.[11] Five large front windows lit the extensive rooms on the first floor; the largest was undoubtedly the ballroom. There were any number of differently-sized rooms, passages, nooks and round cupboards. Some of the smaller rooms were dormitories with four or six beds. Each bed was shared by two girls and Cassandra and Jane Austen almost certainly slept together. The schoolroom may have been on the ground floor; breakfast and dinner were also served there, the parlour boarders being allowed to take tea and have supper in the parlour.[12]

To the north of the schoolhouse there was an extensive and well laid out garden, at its widest 200ft by 300ft, described as beautiful and old-fashioned, where the younger girls played and the older ones sauntered under tall trees on hot summer evenings. It was bounded by a high wall to the west, but on the north and east by earthworks thrown up by the Royalists during the Civil War, using stone from the Abbey, shortly before the Parliamentary forces besieged the town in 1643. In order to climb on to the ramparts, from which they could observe or talk to passers-by in the Forbury, the girls had to negotiate a wide ditch.

The contents of the school, at least as they were in 1794, we know from the notice of an auction sale held after the school's then co-principal (M. Dominique St Quentin, who had married Miss Pitts – see below) went bankrupt that year.[13] They included a piano forte, terrestrial and celestial globes, a magic lantern with historical slides, barometer, thermometer, geographical instruments by George Adams (scientific instrument-maker to George III), and 'scenes for theatrical exhibition'. There were also 'excellent charts and maps, amusing and instructive,



From *The history and Antiquities of Reading*, by the Revd Charles Coates (1802). 9 marks the Abbey Gateway. .

uniting every improved system of private tuition and public education. The 'near forty' bedsteads for sixty pupils confirm that these were shared. Also to be auctioned were sides of bacon, hams and a sow; surprisingly, poultry was not mentioned .

School uniform was a dark dress (bell-skirted for the juniors), protected by a pinafore and topped by a plain cap of Norwich quilt with narrow pleating round the edge – shaped to fit the head tightly. For best, caps were of coloured silk or satin, decorated with flowers or ribbon.[14]

Our knowledge of the school in Reading and its activities comes largely from the reminiscences of Mary Martha Butt (1775-1851), later the prolific author Mrs Sherwood who was a parlour boarder there, 1791-3. About fifty years later, she wrote that it 'had been a school longer by far than any person now living has any record of'.[15] In fact the first certain date is 1755, when Miss Lydia Bell was running the school. That year she took on as an assistant her (probably half-) sister the 17- or 18-year-old Esther Hackett, born in London in 1737 or 1738. Given her later practice of holding forth to pupils about 'plays and play actors and green-room anecdotes and the private lives of actors', Esther may have come of a theatrical family. She was well enough connected to be given an obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[16]

As a teenager Esther renamed herself Sarah; 'for which young lady of common gentility will reach the age of sixteen without altering her name as far as she can?' *(Northanger Abbey*, Chapter 2). The obituary explained, more drastically, 'having early in life, been engaged as a French teacher, her employers thought it right to introduce her into the school under a foreign name', and so she became Mrs La Tournelle. By chance, a genuine Mrs Latournelle dwelt in the same parish of St Laurence's (one of the three ancient parishes of which the town of Reading was divided) until her death in 1780. She was the widow of a former minister of the French Chapel in Wandsworth , south London, and almost as poor as Mrs Bates in *Emma*.[17] Either Miss Hackett cynically adopted the clergy widow's surname, or here is an example of the kind of coincidence we would deplore in Jane Austen's novels.

In 1768 Lydia Bell married William Spencer, then forty-six and since 1750 the organist at St Laurence's church; she must have been older, as she is unlikely to have been the school's principal in her twenties or early thirties. Over the years she and her assistant built up the school into the leading young ladies' boarding academy in Reading and its environs, progressing uneventfully since its name rarely appeared in the *Reading Mercury*. Not until 1781 did Mrs Spencer grace the paper with an advertisement, to deny a report that she was about to close the school.[18]

However, the next year her husband died, followed by her own death in January 1783. Mrs La Tournelle inherited the school and splashed out for several weeks on advertisements. Having been Mrs Spencer's principal assistant for 27 years, she announced, 'by a sedulous and unremitting attention to the several trusts committed to her care, [she] wishes to [recommend herself to her friend's] and the public's favour'.[19]

When the Austen sisters arrived in 1785, the number of pupils was probably

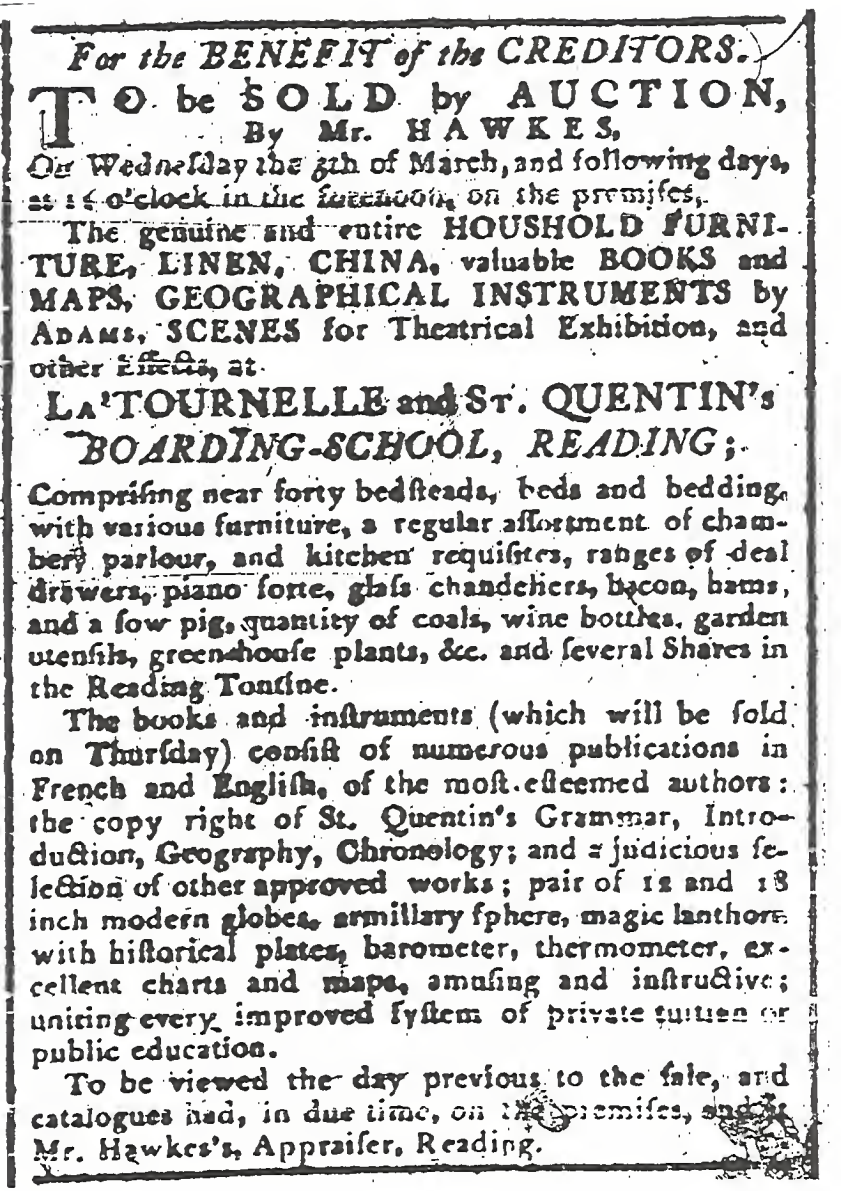
about 40. Mrs La Tournelle benefited by enjoying cordial relations with the headmaster of Reading School for boys, on the north-west side of the Forbury. The Revd Dr Richard Valpy (1754-1836) had been appointed as recently as 1781, but his energies and steadily growing reputation increased the number of pupils from 27 to 85 by mid-1785 and topped the hundred mark in January 1787. Parents with sons at the school could well have been encouraged to send their daughters to Mrs La Tournelle's. She regularly invited Valpy and some of his pupils to dances and other social events. In return, he entertained certain of the young ladies, together with carefully selected boys, at the parties he gave in the imposing headmaster's residence he had built for himself in the Forbury. From time to time he provided the girls' school with teachers.[20]

Mrs Sherwood remembered Mrs La Tournelle as a stout woman with plain features, not intelligent but good on routine; despite her cork leg she was physically very active. She dressed in an old-fashioned way to please herself, and was not above wearing an ancient brown- or grey- striped gown for such messy jobs as packing and unpacking. Her sitting-room had rather tarnished panels, and was hung round with pieces of chenille representing tombs and weeping willows; we do not know who the miniatures over the high mantlepiece depicted. Content to remain for decades in a subordinate position, she enjoyed a busy but undemanding life as matron, a job at which she excelled. Her teaching load was not onerous; as Mrs Sherwood described it, 'there was always a set of little people and of inferior pupils, which belonged to Mrs La Tournelle and sat with her in the school room.'[21]

The teaching side was run by Miss Pitts (her Christian name is not known). In her early twenties, she was an orphan, brought up by a rich bachelor uncle in Berkhamsted who had sent her to Reading as a parlour boarder. She was taken on as a pupil teacher, with the expectation of buying a partnership when her uncle died. When he did die, he left his fortune to his housekeeper, but nevertheless Miss Pitts became a partner. According to Mrs Sherwood, 'her complexion was bright brown and red carmine, her eyes bright, her nose not bad and her teeth white. She had fine dark hair and a beautiful hand and arm'; she danced with great verve, and was 'really the most hospitable, generous and affectionate of human beings' whose warmth and open-heartedness captivated susceptible fathers.[22]

In about 1789 Miss Pitts married M. St Quentin, a former diplomatist from Alsace, who turned out to be a good teacher and increased the number of pupils to about 60. However, he was addicted to gambling, and in 1794 the school had to be sold up to pay off his debts. His former pupil, Mary Butt, wrote a novel, *The Traditions*, to which 738 people subscribed on his behalf for 928 copies at 7s. each; Miss Austen of Steventon was one of the old girls who subscribed.[23] With the proceeds, St Quentin established a new school (close to Henry Austen's later residence) in Hans Place, London, where the author Mary Russell Mitford was educated.

No contemporary account has survived of the curriculum at Reading, which apparently included writing, spelling, French, needlework, drawing and music. Miss Pitts, who spoke English well and French fearlessly, covered these basic



For the BENEFIT *of the* CREDITORS.

TO be SOLD by AUCTION,
By Mr. HAWKES,
On Wednesday the 5th of March, and following days, at 12 o'clock in the forenoon, on the premiſes,

The genuine and entire HOUSHOLD FURNITURE, LINEN, CHINA, valuable BOOKS and MAPS, GEOGRAPHICAL INSTRUMENTS by ADAMS, SCENES for Theatrical Exhibition, and other Effects, at

LA TOURNELLE and ST. QUENTIN'S
BOARDING-SCHOOL, READING;

Compriſing near forty bedſteads, beds and bedding, with various furniture, a regular aſſortment of chamber parlour, and kitchen requiſites, ranges of deal drawers, piano forte, glaſs chandeliers, bacon, hams, and a ſow pig, quantity of coals, wine bottles, garden utenſils, greenhouſe plants, &c. and ſeveral Shares in the Reading Tontine.

The books and inſtruments (which will be ſold on Thurſday) conſiſt of numerous publications in French and Engliſh, of the moſt eſteemed authors: the copy right of St. Quentin's Grammar, Introduction, Geography, Chronology; and a judicious ſelection of other approved works; pair of 12 and 18 inch modern globes, armillary ſphere, magic lanthorn with hiſtorical plates, barometer, thermometer, excellent charts and maps, amuſing and inſtructive; uniting every improved ſyſtem of private tuition or public education.

To be viewed the day previous to the ſale, and catalogues had, in due time, on the premiſes, and of Mr. Hawkes's, Appraiſer, Reading.

subjects. Two or three rather downtrodden teachers helped out; they never seemed to stay long. The most popular subject was of course dancing. In the 1770s the dancing master had been Mr de la Touche, who also taught at Winchester College and other select schools in the vicinity, followed in the 1780s by the Reading-born John Dore. In November 1784 a ball for 'Mrs La Tournelle's Young Ladies' was held at the Town Hall from 7pm onwards, tickets costing 5s.[24] The Town Hall was

rebuilt in 1785-6 and thus unavailable during most of the Austens' time, but after its completion school dances started there again.

The school year had a rhythm of its own, the routine being punctuated by various highlights. Fairs were regularly held in the Forbury, just outside the school garden, and for days before the events themselves must have provided noisy distractions. The Michaelmas Cheese Fair, on 21 September, was one of the principal markets for cheese in England, offering over 1,000 tons for sale, brought in from many parts of the West Country; Reading School boys made gouges tied to stacks for extracting free samples undetected.[25] A month later in 1785, the triennial visitation of Oxford dons to Reading School took place. There a 'numerous and brilliant company of ladies and gentlemen' (undoubtedly including Mrs La Tournelle's girls) attended to hear English and Greek orations and the recitation of Latin poems.[26] Also in October 1785 their elderly second cousin, The Revd Thomas Leigh, called to see the Austen sisters, and gave each a half-guinea tip. Soon afterwards their brother Edward and Jane Cooper's brother, also named Edward (then 18 and 15 respectively) arrived to take the girls out for dinner at a local inn.[27] Their visit must have occurred before term ended in December, as very early in 1786 Edward Austen (later Knight) left for a Grand Tour of Europe.

That January of 1786, the weather was intensely cold, particularly low temperatures being recorded in Hampshire. Snow-drifts, some 10 ft high, made roads impassable; then it turned mild just before the sisters returned to school on 23 January.[28] Mr Austen duly paid the half-year's fees of £36 2s. on 13 February. Five days after the Candlemas Fair of 2 February, the first of the two cattle fairs in the Forbury, a violent storm erupted over Reading, with a boisterous wind, hail and rain, thunder and lightning.[29]

More cheerful news in April was of J. Fawkes' amazing 'pig of knowledge' which was to tell the day of the month, the month of the year, and the value of any piece of money whether English or foreign. The girls must have been allowed to troop down, shillings in hand , to the Saracen's Head inn.[30] This interesting spectacle was an agreeable prelude to the May Fair, another cattle market on 1 May. However, early that month there was a short but sharp frost, and in mid-June blight attacked fruit trees, apples, cherries, pears and plums alike, and oaks were stripped of their leaves. According to the paper, 'the woods in general exhibit the same appearance as at Christmas'.[31] Jane Austen, who was always very sensitive to nature's way of spoiling an English summer, must have seen the physical effects at Steventon when the holidays began in the third week of June.

For her, the economic effects turned out to be momentous. Mr Austen relied for much of his income and subsistence on the parish glebe lands, which he farmed himself, assisted by a bailiff. The mixed farm was partly arable, with cattle sheep, pigs and poultry, plus an orchard, vegetable garden and beehives.[32] The severe winter of 1785-6 had made hay, straw and turnips scarce and very dear, and many animals that survived had lost too much weight to be properly fattened for market that summer.[33] These difficulties were compounded by a plentiful harvest which reduced the average price of wheat by more than a quarter compared with the

previous year, and by the failure of the fruit crop.

Mr Austen's account with Hoare's Bank, London, shows clearly his financial difficulties at that time. In July he had to ask the bank to notify him if a neighbour credited his account with some money; this did not happen and he could afford only two payments in the second half of the year. He must have asked the school if Cassandra and Jane could become ordinary boarders for the term beginning in July, and for their fees to be paid in arrears. They were thus able to remain; but only until the school broke up in mid-December 1786. Mrs Austen's letter, written to a niece on New Year's eve, refers to 'my two Girls, who have now quite left school'.[34] Mrs La Tournelle had to wait for her money until 2 January 1787 when she was paid £16 10s. We do not yet know how much longer Jane Cooper then 15½, stayed on.,

What did Jane Austen learn during these eighteen months between the ages of 9½ and 11? In the absence of direct evidence, we have to work back from what is known or can be deduced. It is now widely accepted that she wrote the first of her Juvenilia in 1787; that is, very shortly after she returned from school. One authority on the Juvenilia has pointed to the 'overwhelming evidence that Jane Austen was early an omnivorous reader in her deflationary burlesques of contemporary novelists' and another has found that 'she was addicted to novels – novels of all kinds.... If it is unusual to find an 11- or 12-year-old girl spending much of her time writing so determinedly, it is even more unusual to find her, at so tender an age, already a confirmed parodist and cynic'. Most cogently, an editor of a standard edition of the Juvenilia has concluded that by the end of the 1780s, she was deeply familiar with most of the English fiction of the eighteenth century' and even earlier 'was as familiar with the workings of fiction as a watchmaker with the interior movements and structures of a clock.'[35]

When and where did she have time to read so many novels? The holidays at Steventon lasted for no more than two months a year, but at Reading she had ample opportunity to do so. Boarders in most other schools were kept fully occupied throughout their waking hours; by contrast, Mrs La Tournelle and her staff went off duty in the afternoons (the main meal was at midday or 1 pm) and left the girls to their own devices. Novels are known to have been lying about in the schoolroom, but Jane Austen would have needed a far larger selection. This could have been provided only by a circulating library.

The connection between circulating libraries and boarding schools is currently being researched and only tentative remarks are possible here.[36] William Lane (c. 1745-1814) was by the 1780s helping to set up libraries in country towns. In 1790 he founded the Minerva Press, its popular novels being aimed partly at boarding-school readers. The school at Reading, or its principals, may have subscribed to a circulating library, the most extensive one locally being only a few minutes' walk away, in the Market Place. That was owned by Carnan & Smart, jobbing printers who published the weekly *Reading Mercury*. No relevant local records now survive, but borrowers lists elsewhere may provide circumstantial evidence.

A related question is how much, if anything, Jane Austen remembered about

her schooldays. Reading appears only incidentally in the three references in the novels and surviving letters, but in 1796 she did remark in a letter to Cassandra, 'I could die of laughter at it, as they used to say at School'. Mrs Goddard's school in Highbury, although lightly sketched in as one of the props in *Emma*, has many touches that ring true. The brilliant sentence in the third chapter, about its being 'a real, honest, old-fashioned Boarding-school', is endlessly quoted, but to the neglect of the passage that follows.

> Mrs Goddard's school was in high repute – and very deservedly; for Highbury was reckoned a particularly healthy spot: she had an ample house and garden, gave the children plenty of wholesome food, let them run about a great deal in the summer, and in winter dressed their chilblains with her own hands. It was no wonder that a train of twenty young couple now walked after her to church. She was a plain, motherly kind of woman, who had worked hard in her youth... [and had a] neat parlour hung round with fancy-work...[37]

Some critics have dismissed Mrs Goddard as no more than a member of the depressed 'professional' middle class, or even as an impoverished gentlewoman , economically vulnerable and socially powerless.[38] In reality, she was an entrepreneuse with a turnover not far short of £700 a year, if her fees matched those in Reading. Mrs La Tournelle possessed the added status of her family connections and friendship with one of the most promising young headmasters in the country. Nineteenth-century English fiction might have taken a different course had Charlotte Bronte been educated under her in Berkshire and Jane Austen had gone to Cowan Bridge in Yorkshire.

T.A.B. CORLEY

Notes

My thanks are due to Elizabeth Jenkins, Deirdre Le Faye, Helen Lefroy and Susan McCartan for help and advice in this research. The partners of C. Hoare & Co kindly allowed me to inspect Mr Austen's bank account, and I am grateful to Mrs Jane Moore for her assistance .

1 D. Le Faye, 'Anna Lefroy's Original Memories of Jane Austen', *Review of English Studies* NS 39 (1988), p. 420.

2 R.W. Jeffery, 'History of the College 1690-1803', Brasenose College Quatercentenary Monographs XXII, 2, *Oxford Historical Society* 53 (Oxford, 1909), p. 29.

3 Le Faye 'Anna Lefroy's Original Memories' , p 420.

4 Authors who have incorrectly spoken of Mrs Cawley's 'school' include J. Fergus, *Jane Austen, A Literary Life* (London, 1991), p. 34; J.A. Hodge, *The Double Life of Jane Austen* (London, 1972), p 21; Elizabeth Jenkins, *Jane Austen, A Biography* (London, 1938, p. 10 of 1986 ed), C. Kent 'Learning History with, and from, Jane Austen', in J.D. Grey (ed.), *Jane Austen's Beginnings* (Ann Arbor, 1989), p. 60; and O. MacDonagh, *Jane Austen: Real and Imaginary Worlds* (London, 1991), p. 76

5 Payments by Mr Austen to Mrs Cawley are given in D. Le Faye, *Jane Austen, A Family Record* (London, 1989), p. 260 note 36. The date of April is given by his payment that month and by his and his wife's departure for Kent at Easter, 20 April 1783. His final settlement was made in September, clearly very soon after the girls' return home.

6 H. Pearson, *Memorials of the Church and Parish of Sonning* (Reading, 1890), p. 226.

7 J.R. Oldfield, 'Private Schools and Academies in Eighteenth Century Hampshire', *Proceedings of Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society* 45 (1989), pp. 147-56.

8 Elizabeth Jenkins, 'Some Banking Accounts of the Austen Family', *Jane Austen Society Collected Reports 1949-1965* (London, 1967), p. 59.

9 35 guineas plus two sets of entrance fees total £38 17s. The trivial discrepancies here and in the payment of February 1786 cannot be explained.

10 Oldfield, 'Private Schools', p. 151.

11 The house is plainly marked on the plans of the Blagrave Estate, 1725 and 1726, Reading Local Studies Library LMC 544, 545.

12 S. Kelly (ed), *The Life of Mrs Sherwood* (London, 1854), pp 84 ff. ; F.J.H. Darton, *The Life and Times of Mrs Sherwood* (London 1910), pp. 124ff. Despite requests in *Notes and Queries* and the *Times Literary Supplement*, the 15 manuscript volumes of her reminiscences have not yet come to light.

13 *Reading Mercury (RM)*, 3 March 1794. For George Adams the elder (d. 1773) and the younger (1750-95), see the *Dictionary of National Biography.*

14 For a picture of a schoolgirl of approximately Jane Austen's age see C. Tomkins, *Eight Views of Reading Abbey* (Reading, 1791, reissued 1805), plate 7. The kinds of cap worn are discussed in Darton , *Mrs Sherwood*, p.144 note 2.

15 Kelly, *Mrs Sherwood*, p. 85; Darton, *Mrs Sherwood* p. 123. A rate-book for St Laurence's parish survives for 1751; a Mr Girle may then have occupied the house, but he has not been firmly identified. Berkshire Record Office D/P 97 11/1.

16 *RM*, 10 February 1783; Kelly, *Mrs Sherwood*, p. 128; *Gentleman's Magazine* 1797, p. 983.

17 Will of Ann Latournelle, 1780, Berkshire Record Office MF 569.

18 *RM,* 22 January 1781.

19 *ibid.* 10 February 1783. William Spencer's will is in Public Record Office Prob 11/1093, 1782, and the renunciation of Lydia Spencer's administration by Esther Hackett, widow (sic), 1783, is in Prob 31/713/99. Mrs La Tournelle left £300 when she died in 1797

20 A.T. Davis, 'A Brief History of Reading School' (unpublished 1974, p. 9) states that 'the girls also joined the boys for the study of some subjects', but the archives of Reading School do not corroborate this statement

21 Kelly, *Mrs Sherwood*, pp. 95-6; Darton, *Mrs Sherwood*, p. 132.

22 Kelly, p. 85.

23 'A Young Lady' (M.M. Butt) *The Traditions, A Legendary Tale* (London, 1795),

List of Subscribers, p. vi.

24 *RM*, 19 October 1772, 15 and 22 November 1784; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 5 and 12 October 1772.

25 W.M. Childs, *The Town of Reading during the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century* (Reading, 1910), pp. 27-8.

26 *RM*, 24 October 1785.

27 Le Faye, *Family Record*, pp. 48-9.

28 *Hampshire Chronicle* 2 and 9 January 1786; *RM*, 9 and 16 January 1786.

29 *RM*, 13 February 1786.

30 *RM*, 10 and 17 April 1786.

31 *RM*, 12 June 1786.

32 P. Hickman, 'Food and Drink', in J.D. Grey (ed.), *The Jane Austen Handbook* (London, 1986), p. 160.

33 A. Young, *Annals of Agriculture* 7 (London, 1786), pp. 44, 53.

34 Le Faye, *Family Record,* p. 54.

35 J. McAleer, *Jane Austen's Beginnings* 'What a Biographer Can Learn about Jane Austen from Her Juvenilia'; and J. Halperin, 'Unengaged Laughter: Jane Austen's Juvenilia', in Grey (ed), *Jane Austen's Beginnings*, pp. 9 and 29 respectively; M.A. Doody 'Introduction' in M.A. Doody, and D. Murray (eds) , *Jane Austen: Catherine and Other Writings* (Oxford, 1993), p. xv

36 E. Copeland, *Women Writing about Money* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 76 ff.; I am grateful for help from Professor Jan Fergus who has outlined for me her current researches. For William Lane, see C.S. Nicholls (ed. *Dictionary of National Biography: Missing Persons*) (Oxford, 1993), pp. 385-6

37 R.W. Chapman (ed.) , *Emma* (1933), pp. 21-2

38 M. Bradbury, 'Jane Austen's *Emma'* in D. Lodge (ed.) , *Jane Austen, Emma, A Casebook* (London, 1968), p. 219; M-E. F. Tobin, 'Aiding impoverished Gentlewomen: Power and Class in È', *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 30 (1988), p 414.

The Revd George Austen's bank account

During Jane Austen's formative years in Steventon, the Austen family economy was to a large extent self-sufficient .The Revd George Austen personally undertook the farming of his three acres of glebe land,: he was also given, by Thomas Knight, the use of Cheesedown Farm in the parish, which added 200 acres to his modest holding. He grew wheat – some being used as flour for home baking – and among his livestock were pigs, sheep and cattle, as well as bees for honey. Mrs Austen kept poultry and grew potatoes, and had access to game and fish locally. About the only grocery products that had to be bought were tea, coffee, spices, citrus fruits and sugar. As competent needlewomen, the Austen mother, daughters and servants made most of the family clothes, from material obtained presumably in Basingstoke. Mr Austen built up his library of 500 volumes mainly by purchasing copies when he had a little money to spare.

In addition to administering the household economy on a cash and subsistence basis, Mr Austen required a bank account for a number of outside transactions. In addition to his stipends, he received a regular income of nearly £125 a year from interest on £3,350 Old South Sea Annuities which represented Mrs Austen's widow's portion, and also from a holding of £810 16s 7d annuities, the origins of which are not clear. The latter, payable on 5 January and 5 July, was credited to his account usually on about 16 January and 14 July. However, the former seems to have been paid through James Leigh Perrot as trustee for the jointure, and arrived with some delay (15 May for the 5 April payment, and 11 November for the 10 October one).

Moreover, the fathers of young men who were his boarding pupils also paid by draft, while he in turn disbursed regular sums for his daughters' tuition away from home; first in 1783 to his relation by marriage, Mrs Ann Cawley, and then between 1785 and 1787 to Mrs La Tournelle, principal of Reading Ladies Boarding School

The records of Mr Austen's banking account, at Hoare's Bank, Fleet Street, London, form an important background source for any study of his daughter Jane's life to 1800. Although many names in the account cannot yet be identified, and some transactions convey little information (e.g. payments to the Basingstoke bankers Jefferys, Toomer and Legge), a systematic study of the accounts year by year may help to chart the ups and downs of Mr Austen's financial fortunes.

I have concentrated on the year 1786, and enquired into why Cassandra and Jane were withdrawn from the school in Reading that December, only eighteen months after they had first joined. The parents may have felt they were not learning enough, or alternatively the withdrawal may have been purely for financial reasons.

The first task was to calculate the balances on account at regular intervals. These were agreed by the bank from time to time, often at the end of the quarter.

The quarterly balances were at a healthy level up to and including that for June 1785. Except for the one at the end of December 1785, those up to and including September 1786 were exceptionally low, varying between £8 and £27.

Over and above the interest receipts discussed above, the only credits for 1786 were as follows:

Qr. I	16 Jan	Thomas Lucas	£16-3-0
II	4 May	George Birch (banker, son a pupil?)	£112-16-6
	20 May	John Lovett of Overton (and June 1787)	£25-0-0
III	none		
IV	28 Dec	George Shum jr (pupil?) (payments continue until 1789)	£35-2-3

29 July 1786, note in ledger: 'Mr Austen desires to be informed of any payment by Mrs (Mr?) Holder, Steventon', presumably the Holders of Ashe Park. Did Mr Austen try to raise a loan from him?

Payments from the account were at the steep levels of nearly £99 in 1786 I and nearly £173 in 1786 II. Thus the balance at end June was down to £26.

11 Aug	William Bayley	£22-2-7

Then nothing until 25 Nov, Thomas Robbins £50; he had been paid £70 in June. Thomas Robins was the Basingstoke postmaster in 1793.

Nothing until 2 Jan 1787, Mrs La Tournelle, £16-10-0. Balance then £52-4-9. To have paid her bill before 28 December would have pushed the account down to 12s 6d.

He was clearly never allowed to go into the red. Hoare's Bank inform me that there are no minutes of partners' meetings or other documents that discuss Mr Austen.

Thus for much of 1786 Mr Austen was in a difficult financial situation. The effects of that season's weather on his farming activities are discussed in my note 'Jane Austen's Schooldays', (see p10 above). A major economy was to take the girls away from school.

To complement the Austen account in relation to the episode of the schooldays, we badly need the equivalent account of the Revd Dr Edward Cooper. Did his daughter Jane in fact join the school in July 1784, a few days after his induction to the living at Sonning? Did the fee payments include extras, and were they normally made within month of the beginning of term? Did Jane Cooper stay on at school after December 1786, thereby strengthening the view that no fault was found in the teaching side of the school? Dr Cooper did not bank at Hoare's (the Rev E.C. who *did* at that time was a different person altogether). Enquiries are being made at other banks, according to Professor Leslie Pressnell, the foremost authority on banking in this period, Dr Cooper's father. Gislingham Cooper, had owned a bank at the corner of the Strand and Arundel Street, London. However, that bankmust have closed after Gislingham Cooper's death in 1768.

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		Brought Forward (beginning of quarter)	Credits	Debits	End Balance
		£-s-d	£-s-d	£-s-d	£-s-d
31 Dec 1784	IV	42-7-5	142-14-6	76-9-0	108-12-11
31 March 1785	I	108-12-11	52-3-2	57-2-0	103-14-1
30 June	II	103-14-1	107-3-6	131-14-6	79-3-1
30 September	III	79-3-1	92-3-2	162-19-0	8-7-3
31 December	IV	8-7-3	86-18-6	13-2-6	82-3-3
31 March 1786	I	82-3-3	28-6-2	98-16-6	11-12-11
30 June	II	11-12-11	188-1-6	172-17-6	26-16-11
30 September	III	26-16-11	12-3-2	22-2-7	16-17-6
31 December	IV	16-17-6	85-7-3	50-0-0	52-4-9
31 March 1787	I	52-4-9	2767-4-2	217-8-6	111-0-5
30 June	II	111-0-5	343-17-9	311-10-0	143-8-2

T.A.B.CORLEY

Mrs George Austen's Will

The news of Jane's death in Winchester reached Mrs Austen in Chawton at about midday on 18 July 1817. She wrote to Anna Lefroy:

'I was not prepared for the Blow, for tho it in a manner hung over us I had reason to think it at a distance, & was not quite without hope that she might in part recover ...'. Now that such a hope had been so suddenly extinguished, with her usual brisk practicality Mrs Austen made her own Will, taking into account the change in the family circumstances.

I, Cassandra Austen, widow, of Chawton in the County of Southampton make this my last Will and Testament in manner following; I give and bequeath all my Property of every kind to my sole surviving Daughter Cassandra Elizabeth and I make her my said Daughter my sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament, to which I sign my Name this Twenty second day of July in the year of our Lord, One Thousand, Eight Hundred, and Seventeen. Cassandra Austen.'

The Will was witnessed by Henry and Frank Austen and by Martha Lloyd, and was proved in London by Cassandra on 12 March 1827, when the total value was £600. For some unknown reason, the official manuscript transcript of the document was left incomplete, but the original Will survives in the Public Record Office who kindly provided a xerox copy from which the above text is now transcribed – their reference PROB/10/4933.

DEIRDRE LE FAYE

The Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth

The Royal Academy at Portsmouth, attended by Jane Austen's brothers Frank and Charles before entry into the Royal Navy, was founded by an order of the Lords of the Admiralty dated 3 March 1729 (OS) which decreed 'A Plan to be prepared for building an Academy in Portsmouth Yard for the reception of 40 Young Gentlemen'; the first scholars were admitted in 1733.[1] A major reorganisation of the establishment took place in 1773 and on 1 November in that year the Admiralty issued printed 'RULES and ORDERS relating to the ROYAL ACADEMY Established in His Majesty's Dock-Yard at Portsmouth, for Educating Young Gentlemen to the SEA SERVICE.' There were 41 separate regulations spread over 17 pages.

These stipulate, among much else, that 'NONE shall be admitted but the Sons of Noblemen or Gentlemen, who shall not be under Twelve Years of Age, nor above Fifteen... *except Fifteen young gentlemen, the Sons of Commissioned Officers of His Majesty's Fleet, who are to be educated at the Public Expence* [Article I].

'No scholar shall be admitted... – until he has been examined by the Head-Master in the presence of the Governor... [Article II]

'The Commissioner of His Majesty's Navy for the Time being at the Dock-Yard at Portsmouth, shall be the Governor of the Academy'... [Article IV]

'The Scholars are to lodge in separate Chambers, and all to board with the Master, who is to be paid by each of those who are admitted into the Academy upon the Original Establishment, the Sum of Twenty-five Pounds a Year and no more, and who is to be paid the like Allowance, by Bills signed by the Navy-Board upon the Treasurer of His Majesty's Navy, for each of the Fifteen Sons of Sea-Officers before mentioned: In Consideration of which, he is to keep them a decent and proper Table, and to find them in Washing, Fire, Candles, Towels, Table and Bed-Linen, ...' [Article VII]

'Every Scholar is to be provided Yearly, at his own Expence, with a new Suit of Blue Cloaths... – conformable to a Pattern-Suit lodged with the Master...' – [Article XI]

'... the Scholars be instructed in Writing, Arithmetick, Drawing, Navigation, Gunnery, Fortification, and other useful Parts of the Mathematicks; and also in the French Language, Dancing, Fencing, and the exercise of the Firelock...' [Article XIII]

'The Scholars are to be punished for their Faults... by the Rod, by Imposition of Task, or by Confinement... and for more heinous offences, by Expulsion...' [Article XXIII]

'Upon Application from the Parents or Guardians of any of the Scholars to the Commissioner, he may give them Leave, either at Christmas or Whitsuntide, to be absent for Three Weeks to visit their Friends...' [Article XXVI]

Francis Austen was admitted on 12 April 1786 and left in December 1788. Charles entered on 15 July 1791 and remained until 1794. It is a common misconception that no fees were charged once a boy had been accepted, and that

Mr Austen was therefore relieved of the expense of their upkeep; but only the sons of naval officers on the 'New Establishment' (limited to 15) received free board and tuition (see Article I above), and the Austen boys were not in this category. Nor were the annual fees of £25 the only outlay which their father had to make; a memorandum gave the following details: The maintaining a Youth at the Royal Academy Portsmouth may, on an average, amount to near £50 per ann. The particulars of expence as below.

'Mr A.B.'s Acct. : Boarding £25/0/0. Pocket & travelling £3/19/3. Instruments & stationery £2/17/8. Sundries, letters, mending &c. 15/11. Upholster £2/6/9. Mercer £5/8/11. Linen Draper £1/18/8. Taylor £2/1/11. Milliner 10/11. Barber 17/1. Hatter 17/0. Shoemaker £2/0/2. Fencing Master 2/6. *Total:* £48/16/9.'

A typical account was then given for the 'Hon. C.D.' amounting to £68/12/4, 'But in these accounts no Alehouse scores are included. '

The Portsmouth Commissioner, as Governor, played an active role in the running of the Academy. In Frank's time he was Henry Martin – subsequently *Sir* Henry Martin, Baronet, Comptroller of the Navy. By the time Charles arrived the Commissioner was Charles Saxton, later *Sir* Charles Saxton, Bt. The headmaster, appointed in 1785, was the distinguished astronomer William Bayly who had sailed with James Cook on his second and third voyages.[2] Bayly was assisted by the Mathematical Master (since 1767) Mr Bradley (who died in 1794 and was replaced by his son James, previously employed in the Dock Yard). The French Master from 1782 to 1806 was James Samuel Charrier, and the Dancing Master was P. Alliez.

Article XXX of the *RULES and ORDERS* stipulated that the Commissioner was to report to the Secretary of the Admiralty during the first week in March on the progress made by the scholars over the past year. No reports now exist earlier than that of 1789/90, so our knowledge of Frank's career at the Academy is limited to a leaving report written by Commissioner (*not* Headmaster) Henry Martin to the Lords of the Admiralty, a copy of which remains in family possession: 'I beg leave to observe to their Lordships that this Young Gentleman has completed his plan of Mathematical learning in a considerably shorter time than usual, his assiduity indeed has been uncommon, and his conduct during the whole time he has been at the Academy, has been in all respects so properly correct, that I have never had a complaint or one unfavourable report of him from any Master or Usher altho' he has a lively and active disposition'.[3]

A much fuller picture can be drawn of Charles's time there. The Commissioner's report for the year 1 March 1791 to 29 February 1792 shows that Charles Austin [sic], in his 13th year, son of Reverend Geo. Austin of Steventon, Hants, by the Admiralty's Warrant dated 15 July 1791 entered the Academy on 20 July. *Before entry* he had learnt: 'Latin, Writing & Arithmetick to the Rule of Three.' It then proceeded with assessments for individual subjects:

Mathematical	Is learning of Euclid – having gone through Arithmetic and Logarithms.
French	Very diligent.

Fencing	----
Drawing & Writing	Writes & draws but midling. Is very industrious.
Dancing	Dances tolerably.
Head Master	Has a very good Capacity, is very attentive to his studies and of a good disposition.
Governor	Good capacity & behaviour with very considerable industry.

The Commissioner added some general comments on the year:

'I pray leave to observe that at this juncture there is a good harmony and mutual agreement not only among the Scholars, but the several Masters, except the Dancing Master, of whose neglect frequent complaints have been made to me, and I have been as frequently obliged to reprove him, but hope my admonitions will effect a better observance in future. And I am to remark that the duty of the Fencing Master, from his infirmities, has been performed by a substitute for many months past... C. Saxton'.

Charles Austen's report for 1792/3 was:

Mathematical	Has proceeded in his Plan as far as Current Sailing.
French	Very diligent.& behaves very well.
Drawing & Writing	Writes & draws pretty well.
Dancing	Dances indifferently.
Head Master	Is of good disposition and capacity; diligent and makes good progress.
Governor	Of good capacity, well disposed & industrious.

In 1793/4:

Mathematical	Has proceeded in his Plan as far as Lunar Observations.
French	Pretty diligent.
Drawing & Writing	Writes & draws pretty well – Behaves well.
Dancing	Dances very well.
Fencing	No Fencing Master has attended during this time.
Attendant	Messrs Egerton, Barnard, . . [etc.]... *Austen* ... [etc.] having been frequently with me in the Rigging House, seeing the several Ships Rigging fitted &c. – and also at the Academy running over the Rigging and Blocks of the model of the Victory, and rigging and unrigging the Academy Yacht [the 53 foot 'Bolton'], sailing her out to Spithead and St Helens, telling them the names, Bearings, distances and marks of the Out Buoys on the Sand heads. I observed they took notice, and have made Improvements (for the time they were under my care) both in the Practic and Theorical parts of seamanship.
Shipwright	The following Young Gentlemen have received the number of Lessons as expressed against their Names:- Messrs Egerton 3, Barnard 16,...[etc.]... *Austin* 26 [no one else exceeded this number]... [etc.] – and having shewn them the

	manner of bringing to and fastening the Main Wales, Lower, Upper, Quarter Deck & Forecastle Clamps, scarptring the beams &c. of the Swift Sloop – also the use of the Draught, laying off and taking the Bevellings of the Square and Cant Timbers, Crossing and levelling the Floors, getting up and securing the Frame bends and the use of the Bollard Timbers and Nause Pieces on the Tiger, building at this Port – they have made good Improvement therein.
Use of the Firelock	The Young Gentlemen of the Royal Academy are very well improved in the art of the Firelock for their time.
Gunner in Ordinary	The Young Gentlemen have been very attentive to, and have made good Progress in learning the nature and use of the Cannon.
Head Master	Has a pretty good Capacity and is very attentive to his studies.
Governor	Of a tolerable Capacity [other boys are of '*good* Capacity'] & very attentive and well behaved.

The Governor's general remarks for this year:

'I pray leave to observe that at this Juncture there is a pretty good Harmony and Agreement among the Scholars and the several Masters; and that upon my frequent visiting the Academy, I find the latter are very diligent in, and give due attention to their Business, and the methods used by them in educating the Young Gentlemen are very regular, familiar and instructive, and agreeable to the Plan approved of by C. Saxton The report for 1794/5 merely showed that Charles Austen was discharged on 14 Se.ptember 1794 'To go to Sea in the Daedalus'.

The impression given by the Commissioner's general remarks is very different from that of 'One of Francis's contemporaries at the Academy' who recalled 'The name of the Master of this school was Orchard, a very good man he was; but who the devil taught him navigation is more than I can say. He was a great disciplinarian and used to flourish with direful sway an infernal horsewhip, that I have reason to remember'.[4] This obviously biased statement should be treated with caution. The Master in Francis and Charles's time was not 'Orchard' but, as mentioned earlier, William Bayly; and far from being ignorant of navigation, Bayly was one of its foremost practitioners. The only unsatisfactory aspect to the teaching of the subject seems to have been the poor equipment available. In 1791 Bayly wrote a letter to the Commissioner setting out at length the necessity of acquiring a new telescope and astronomical instruments for the Observatory belonging to the Royal Academy, those currently in use having been made 'before the Achromatic object glasses were invented'. In 1803 'the 12 Inch Globes belonging to the Academy, are wore out and totally useless: They were Old Globes & much wore when I was appointed Master at the Academy, which is near 19 years ago; and they have been in constant use among the Scholars ever since.' But whatever the state of the equipment, Francis and Charles Austen stand as fine witnesses to the quality of the teaching.

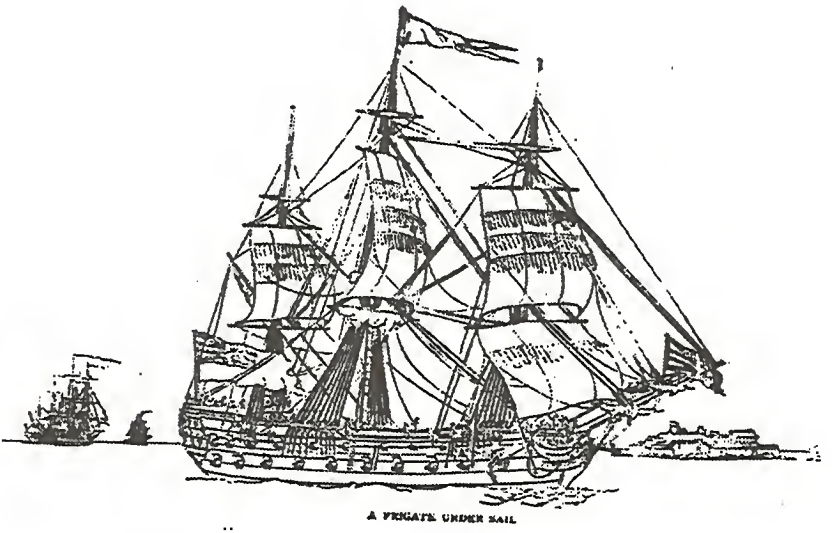
After undergoing extensive alterations and additions, the Academy was

transformed into the 'Royal Naval College' in 1807, and William Bayly retired. It continued at Portsmouth under the management of a Lieutenant Governor, Superintendent, Professor and Preceptor until 1837. The building, though totally altered inside, can still be seen in the Dockyard.

ROBIN VICK

Notes

1 All facts quoted in this article, except where noted otherwise, are from: Public Record Office, ADM 1/3504 & 3505.
2 See *D N B* for an outline of Bayly's career
3 Quoted in *Jane Austen, A Family Record* by Deirdre Le Faye (British Library, 1989), p. 61.
4 Christopher Lloyd, 'The Royal Naval Colleges at Portsmouth and Greenwich', *Mariner's Mirror* (1966), p. 146, and quoted in George Holbert Tucker, *A Goodly Heritage* (1983), p. 166.



From *Sea Life in Nelson's Time*, by J. Masefield (1905)

Jane Austen and Kotzebue



In 1799 when Jane Austen was staying at Queen Square in Bath with her brother Edward, his wife Elizabeth and their two eldest children, as well as Jane's mother Mrs Austen, she agreed with Edward to end their visit by an evening at the play. The fashionable Theatre Royal in Orchard Street was presenting a double-bill of *Blue Beard* (a pantomime) and *The Birthday Day,* a new comedy.[1] The lavish *Blue Beard* contained delightful incidental music by Michael Kelly from which 'The March' was quickly added by Jane to her own manuscript music book.[2] It is, however, *The Birthday* (as it is generally known) which is of greater interest. This play was translated by C. Ludger as *Reconciliation*, and found to be too literal; although Ludger's version was published, it was never performed. Thomas Dibdin made a better job of the stage adaptation and it is his version of the play that Jane Austen saw. This play by August von Kotzebue is the first recorded instance of Jane Austen's being exposed to the vogue for German literature, which was then sweeping the country, and which was to have an effect (even if only of a satirical nature) on her own writing.

Between 1790 and 1810 the works of many German authors, covering philosophy, poetry, biography and drama, were translated into English. The name of Kotzebue was a household word from John o'Groats to Land's End. Season after season his plays were presented not only in London, but in the theatre of every market town that could boast a stage. Of thirty-six translated plays, twenty-two of Kotzebue's were produced on the English stage.[3]

Not everyone was as delighted as the play-going public by this wave of Germanic liberalism. George Canning, James Gillray the caricaturist, and William Gifford (a staunch fan of Jane Austen when editing *Emma* for the publisher John Murray) created a conservative magazine *The Anti-Jacobin*, to combat the dangerous spread of unorthodox ideas.[4] A playlet was conceived which, it was hoped, would sink Kotzebue and his hold on the public imagination. It was mounted at Drury Lane (in a double-bill with *The Birthday* and just a few nights after a successful revival of *Lovers' Vows*), but the phlegmatic British public were not to be put off by such tactics! Kotzebue's plays continued to hold the stage for another fifteen years.

August von Kotzebue was born in Weimar, Saxony in May 1761. His first comedy, written when he was a law student at Jena, gave him the entree into court

circles. He was forced into exile in 1781 for a reason not specified, and joined the Russian Civil Service in 1783. In the province of Estonia, in 1785, he became president of the magistracy , when he was ennobled. During this colourful period of his life he wrote his greatest pieces, *The Stranger* and *Pizarro*. Kotzebue was a restless character, spending some of his time in Vienna writing for the municipal theatre. On his return to Russia, he was caught up in a nightmare situation, arrested, exiled to Siberia for no apparent reason, and handed on from official to official with no hope of gaining freedom. As capriciously as he had imprisoned him, Emperor Paul I released Kotzebue a few months later. He was given an estate in Livonia and made director of the German theatre in St. Petersburg.

In 1801 he went back to Weimar, but he was not on good terms with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe or the Romantics, and so returned to Russia during 1806. In 1817 the Emperor Alexander sent Kotzebue abroad to report on Western ideas in politics, finance and education. Accusing Kotzebue of being a spy in the pay of a reactionary power, a radical student, Karl Sand, assassinated the hapless author at Mannheim, Baden, in March 1819.[5]

The story of *The Birthday* concerns two brothers (Captain and Mr Bertram) fighting over a garden; the Captain's retired boatswain tries (with the two children of the brothers) to effect a reconciliation. Jack Junk, the boatswain, is a great comic part as he uses nautical terms throughout the play to great effect. As late as 1834 *The Birthday* was billed as *Captain Bertram and Jack Junk* at the Surrey Theatre to lure patrons in to see their favourite character.

Jane Austen did not use the Bertrams' quarrels over a parcel of land in *The Birthday* to put into her novel *Mansfield Park*, merely purloining the translated name Bertram (Dr Blum in the original *Die Versohnung*). The grasping old lady Mrs Moral may well bear a resemblance to Mrs Norris. There is something of Fanny and Edmund in the characters of the young, virtuous daughter Emma, and her cousin, the equally spotless Harry, whom she marries. The use of Kotzebue's (then) notorious play *Lovers' Vows* within *Mansfield Park*, and the destruction of repose by the Crawfords' unusual behaviour has already been the subject of too many books and articles to reiterate here. Jane's enjoyment of *The Birthday* is not recorded, but reviewing the London production just two months previously, in April 1799, *The Times* described the acting as excellent, the play promised to be very popular.[6] Bath theatre audiences were accustomed to seeing the latest plays from London within a matter of weeks.

Robert William Elliston, a noted actor at the Bath theatre, was just beginning his rise to fame and fortune when the Austen family moved to Bath in 1801. Just one year older than Jane Austen, whilst learning his trade at Bath during the period 1799-1804, this talented actor was to appear before the royal family at Windsor as well as accepting the odd London engagement at Covent Garden. He married a young dancing teacher, Elizabeth Rundall, whom Jane Austen thought should be in London with the actor when he became famous at Drury Lane, rather than remaining in Bath to teach. Jane Austen's letters bear out the fact that she knew Elliston's work very well. She comments on his voice, his wife and his wealth

over the years. Perhaps she and Cassandra admired him, from a distance! On his farewell to Bath in 1804, Elliston performed his most famous impersonation of Rolla in Kotzebue's *Pizarro*; might not the Austen sisters have seen this – *the* popular choice of the Bath audience? He continued to appear in the piece for the next twenty years.[7]

The last recorded instance of Jane Austen being present at a performance of a Kotzebue translation, is her visit to the Lyceum Theatre, London on 14 September 1813. Jane had just arrived in London and within three hours found herself whisked off to see *The Beehive* in a long triple-bill which included *Five Hours at Brighton*, also *Don Juan, or the Libertine Destroyed. The Beehive* is based on Kotzebue's delightful comedy *Das Posthaus in Treuenbrietzen.* Two lovers who have never seen each other fall in love under assumed names (hers being Fairfax). The man discovers the ruse first and introduces his best friend as himself, the girl in retaliation pretends to fall in love with the best friend.[8]

Confusion and a happy ending. Jane Austen dismisses it as 'rather less flat and trumpery' than the low comedy *Five Hours at Brighton.* The great irony is that through Jane Austen, the German playwright is now remembered with such fondness.

CHRIS VIVEASH

Notes

1 Jean Freeman, *Jane Austen in Bath* (Alton: Jane Austen Society, 1983), p 15.
2 Patrick Piggott, *The Innocent Diversion* (London: D. Cleverdon, 1979), p .49.
3 L.F.Thompson, *Kotzebue: A survey of his progress in France and England* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honore Champion, 1928), p.55
4 Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), p.89
5 *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago: 1995) Vol.6, p.975
6 *The Times*, 10 April 1799
7 Belville Penley, *The Bath Stage* (London: William Lewis & Son, 1892),pp.75-79
8 Thompson, p.88

The Devonshire roots of Sense and Sensibility

According to Austen family tradition, *Elinor and Marianne* was first written in epistolary form *ca.* 1795; Jane re-cast it into direct narrative in 1797-98, and probably re-titled it *Sense and Sensibility* in 1799. The manuscript then lay fallow until 1809, when she added a couple of small up-dating touches prior to offering it to Egerton in 1810, and it was finally published on 30th October 1811.[1] Although the story begins at Norland Park in Sussex, it quickly moves to Devonshire and the bulk of the action is almost equally divided between London and Devonshire. Jane's own acquaintance with London had begun as early as August 1788, when she and her parents on their return journey from a trip into Kent visited Mrs Hancock and Eliza de Feuillide in Orchard Street; and in later years she would have gained further knowledge of the smart West End of London from Eliza, who lodged at various addresses in the Marylebone district before marrying Henry Austen in 1797. But there is no record of Jane and her parents visiting Devonshire before the summer of 1801, by which time *S&S* was obviously fully completed. What then led her to set the Middleton establishment at Barton Park in Devonshire, when the county was personally unknown to her?

It seems probable that in this case she relied upon information provided by other people and that her earliest knowledge of Devon came from the Bullers, an ancient and wide-ranging West Country family, one of whose branches was well-known to the Austens. The Revd Dr William Buller (1736-96) had been an Oxford contemporary of the Revd George Austen, but soon moved into higher clerical circles; not long after graduation he became a Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral and from 1763-92 had a house in the Close. He was also a comfortable pluralist, being appointed Dean of Exeter in 1784, in 1788 acquiring simultaneously the three Hampshire rectories of Overton, Old Alresford and Wonston, and in 1790 becoming Dean of Canterbury. His final appointment was that of Bishop of Exeter in 1792, and no doubt upon this occasion his furniture, like that of the Dashwoods, was taken round by water from Hampshire to Devon – for small trading craft the River Exe was navigable from its mouth in the Channel right up to the old walls of the City of Exeter, practically below the Cathedral itself.

One of the Bishop's sons, Richard (1776-1806), was a pupil at Steventon Rectory *ca.* 1790-95, and obviously would tell the Austens all about his new home in Exeter. Richard Buller seems to have become very fond of his tutor's family and kept in touch with them for the rest of his life; there are several references to him in Jane's letters concerning his poor health, his marriage, and his terminal illness. Before his untimely death in December 1806 Richard had already become a pluralist like his father and held three Devon livings – he was appointed vicar of Colyton in 1799, perpetual curate of Stoke Canon 1800, and rector of West Buckland 1801. It may be significant that Stoke Canon is just about 'four miles northward' of Exeter.

The name of Barton Park may have been a deliberately vague choice on Jane's part; a 'barton' originally meant a farm where corn was grown and later on in

the Middle Ages came to mean a demesne farm or the outlying grange of a large property. Such a commonplace description obviously needed another element to provide necessary distinction, and within a very limited radius northward of Exeter there are no less than 17 villages or hamlets which have the element 'Barton' as part of their name.[2]

A second source of knowledge concerning the West Country became available to Jane when the South Devon Militia were stationed in Hampshire during the winter of 1794-95, three out of their eight companies actually being quartered in Basingstoke.[3] The young Jane undoubtedly met and danced with the officers at the assembly balls in Basingstoke Town Hall, just as she later envisaged the Bennet sisters would when the militia who came to Hertfordshire animated Meryton's social life.

It seems entirely probable, therefore, that the peculiarly detailed location of Barton Park and its surroundings (more precise descriptions are given than in any other of Jane's novels) – including the odd little touch of the hillside rising straight up from the back-garden gate of Barton Cottage – stems from Richard Buller's information regarding Exeter and its immediate countryside, such information then being enhanced and fixed in Jane's memory by conversations with the Devonshire Militia, whose presence in Basingstoke coincided with Richard Buller's last year of residence at Steventon Rectory.

DEIDRE LE FAYE

Notes

1 Deirdre Le Faye, *Jane Austen: A Family Record* (London, 1989), 83-84, 95, 99, 102, 164, 167.

2 Eilert Ekwall. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 4th edn 1970).

3 John Breihan and Clive Caplan, 'Jane Austen and the Militia', in *Persuasions* No. 14 (1992), 16-26.

A tourist's view of Southampton and Portsmouth in 1811

Shortly before moving from lodgings to a house in Castle Square, Southampton in 1807, Jane Austen wrote: 'We hear that we are envied our House by many people, & that the Garden is the best in the Town.' Her nephew recorded in his *Memoir* that it was 'a commodious old-fashioned house in a corner of Castle Square' and that it 'had a pleasant garden, bounded on one side by the old city walls; the top of this wall was sufficiently wide to afford a pleasant walk, with an extensive view, easily accessible to ladies by steps... At that time Castle Square was occupied by a fantastic edifice, too large for the space in which it stood, though too small to accord well with its castellated style, erected by the second Marquis of Lansdowne'.[2] An article in the Society's *Report for 1978* summarises what is known of the house (and neighbouring 'Castle') during the time of the Austens' residence in Southampton, and is accompanied by two illustrations of the Southampton waterfront which show the house itself.[3]

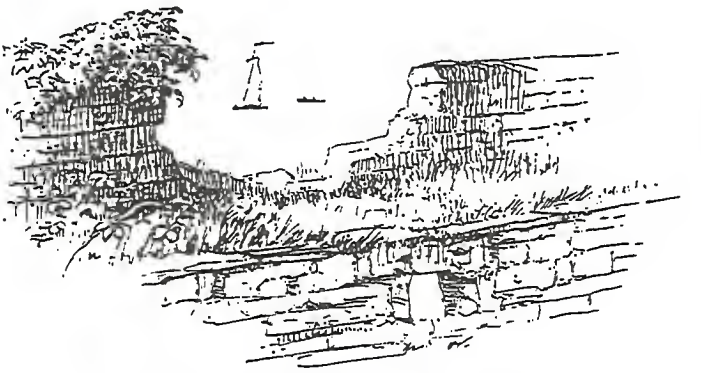
These illustrations confirm that it was indeed a substantial house – one that may well have been 'envied... by many people' – and that its garden was spacious, with what must have been a wonderful view. This prompts speculation how, in their comparatively straitened financial circumstances following the death of Jane's father, the Austen ladies could afford to live there. (After a visit to some Southampton acquaintance in 1807 Jane wrote: 'They live in a handsome style and are rich, and... we gave her to understand that we were far from being so...') They were, it is true, joining forces with the recently married Frank Austens, and their friend Martha Lloyd must also have made a contribution, but neither of these was particularly well off. (Because of the loss through storm damage of the ship's books of HMS *Canopus*, Captain Frank Austen had as yet received no pay for his period of command of that vessel – March 1805 to June 1806 – nor any subsequent half-pay. His claim was not settled until January 1808.[4])

Perhaps the rent was not as high as such a house might be expected to command, for although it enjoyed the advantages mentioned above its location was not considered at all desirable. The *Guide to all the Watering and Sea-Bathing Places* published in 1810 stated that 'The lovely situation of Southampton, the elegance of its buildings, the amenity of its environs, and the various other attractions which it possesses, in a very high degree, will always render it a place of fashionable residence, as well as of frequent resort.'[5] But this description did not apply to the whole of the town.

In 1811 William Wilshere of Hitchin made a tour through Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight; he reached Southampton on 2 October and recorded his favourable initial impression in a travel journal. Then, 'After dinner we went to see Lansdown Castle, the seat of the Marquis of Lansdown (once called Lord Henry Petty) it stands on the side of the town, next the river, which washes its lofty walls on one side at high tide; it will be a grand building when finish'd, is now undergoing some considerable alterations. *The way up to the Castle (there is only one) is a very disagreeable one, through some very narrow, dirty, lanes*'.[6]

Two days earlier (30 September) William Wilshere had visited Portsmouth. Jane Austen had begun to write *Mansfield Park* in 1811. So Wilshere's journal entry, offering a contemporary view of the port which plays an important part in that novel, is of considerable interest:

'... and getting to Havant 9 miles (and half way to Portsmouth) we found ourselves ready for breakfast, after which we hurry'd on fearing we should be too late to gain admittance to the Dockyard, (into which we had been told they did not admit strangers after 11 o'clk) there was nothing very striking in the ride, until we got within about 4 miles of P. when we had to pass over drawbridges, which had



Old city wall, Southampton, by Ellen G. Hill,
from Jane Austen: Her homes and her friends by Constance Hill (1902).

sentries placed by them, and strong fortifications, planted with cannon, about 3 miles farther on, we had to pass several more bridges, and very considerable fortifications, with a many soldiers &c. After driving (I thought it) a long way through very narrow, dirty, streets, very much like some of Wapping, we found the Royal Oak Inn (where we had been recommended) and putting in our horses &c. went directly (about 20 mi. past 11) to the gates of the dock-yard, where we were told it was too late for admittance, but after a little parley, learnt a gentleman with his family were coming in about 2 hours, when *perhaps* we might get in with them – in the interim we got a boatman to take us about the harbour. We had a pleasant sail amongst the shipping which with boats &c. sailing in all directions, made it a very lively scene. We found our sailor a very intelligent fellow, the number of ships in the harbour was not so considerable as I expected to see, the fleets generally lying higher up, at Spithead – saw several of the Danish ships brought from Copenhagen, French, & Russian prizes &c. &c. also the hulks for French prisoners, and those on which the convicts are confined aboard. – Got back just as the workmen (about 3,000) were returning from dinner; again found some difficulty in gaining admittance, but after putting down our names, and places of residence, in a large book, we hurry'd

forward to join a party who had just entered, were first shown some ships in the dry docks, undergoing repairs &c. and saw two, or three, on the stocks a-building, next went to the house where the copper is melted, and afterwards rolled into plates, for covering the ships bottoms, the rolling of the copper after casting is performed by a steam engine of 40 horse-power, it was a very curious process, but the most so of any is the making of Blocks (what we should call pullys) which are used about the rigging, it is all performed by means of a steam-engine (of 30 horse power) sawing, turning, boring &c. in a very expeditious manner, it was all together a very entertaining sight – we next arrived at the Smith's work shop where the large anchors, and all the other iron work wanted about a ship is made, it is a very long, lofty building with a row of large furnaces, on each side, it was a dismal black looking place reminding one of the fabulous accounts of old Vulcan and his forges – we were not permitted to enter the rope walk (as no strangers are) so could not see much of that work only by looking in at the door, the men appear'd to work harder at it than at any of the other processes. We now left the yard and returning to our Inn, got dinner as quick as we could, after which were glad to get out of P. We went very little about the town, what parts we saw were very disagreeable, and the people mostly appear'd a very rough, low, class'.[7]

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Notes

1 Deirdre Le Faye (ed.), *Jane Austen's Letters*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1995) p.123
2 James Edward Austen-Leigh, *Memoir of Jane Austen*, (1st edn 1870; rep. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1951), ch.4
3 Joan Grigsby, 'The House in Castle Square', in *Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society, 1975-1985,* pp.92-97
4 Public Record Office: ADM 1/1451 [1807 A81]
5 Quoted in Maggie Lane, *Jane Austen's England*, (London, 1986) p.143
6 Hertfordshire Record Office: Manuscript journal of William Wilshere, doc. ref. 61175
7 ibid

Rural crime

Though incidents of petty crime are rare in Jane Austen's novels, they are not entirely absent. In *Emma*, for example, there is the episode of Harriet Smith and the gypsies, and the robbery of Mrs Weston's turkeys ('Other poultry-yards in the neighbourhood also suffered') was directly responsible for reconciling Mr Woodhouse to the marriage of his daughter. How much real crime was there in the north Hampshire countryside where Jane was born and brought up? Quarter Sessions and Assize records, together with local newspaper reports, suggest that the area was of a comparatively law-abiding nature; but inevitably there were some incidents over the years.

Poaching, surprisingly, does not *seem* to have been a great problem, though it may well be that the majority of such offences were dealt with summarily by local magistrates and went unrecorded. One of the few instances to be noted occurred in 1780 when Whitchurch labourer Joseph Edwards was 'detected with taking up a Wire on the Sabbath-day, which had been set for the destruction of game...'. Edwards absconded before he could answer the charge, and a reward of two guineas was offered by James Kirkby, steward to the Earl of Portsmouth, for information leading to his capture.[1]

The stewards of Lord Portsmouth (at Hurstbourn) and Lord Bolton (at Hackwood) intermittently placed notices in the *Reading Mercury* and the *Hampshire Chronicle* to warn potential predators off the game on their manors, but either the warnings were heeded or detection avoided for there were very few prosecutions. Besides vigilant and well-armed keepers, a range of gruesome deterrents was available: '*Whereas* some person or persons did on Monday night last break in the garden of the Rev. William St. John, at Dogmersfield, and maliciously pull up and destroy all the Melon and Cucumber Plants, with large fruit thereon. He does hereby offer a reward of £10 to any person who will give such information as to convict the offender or offenders thereof. Spring guns, thigh snappers, and body squeezers, are and will continue to be set in various parts of the said garden and all other premises in the occupation of the said William St. John.' [2]

Many offences were undoubtedly committed because of a genuine, desperate need for food and fuel – a need heightened by the effects of the many enclosure awards enacted in the eighteenth-century which deprived some rural labourers of a means of subsistence. In 1759 '... certain ill-disposed Persons did... riotously assemble, and maliciously break down and destroy the Fences, and new-planted Quick-Hedges, upon Norleigh-Heath, in the County of Oxford, belonging to JAMES LEIGH PERROT esq [Jane's uncle]...'.[3] In 1772, 'WHEREAS Great Damage has been done for many Years past, to the Hedges, Lands, and Coppices at Popham in the County of Southampton by several idle and disorderly People, by gathering of Mushrooms and Nuts: This is to give Notice, that whoever is found trespassing thereon for the future will be prosecuted to the utmost Severity of the Law'.[4] In 1779, 'some malicious and evil-disposed person... did... pull up and break several young FIR TREES, that were lately planted in a field at Popham, called Oakerridge,

near the turnpike road ...'.[5]

But more prevalent were thefts of agricultural and domestic livestock. Victims known to the Austen family included James Leigh Perrot, now removed to Scarlets in Berkshire, whose 'Hen-House was broke open... and a Number of Fowls were stolen from thence' in 1772 (he offered a reward of ten guineas)[6]; William Evelyn of Preston Candover (and St Clere, Kent and Bath) who lost a horse in 1775; Philip Lybbe Powys of Hardwicke House whose fish ponds were robbed in 1779; and the Revd Fulwar Craven Fowle of Kintbury from whom a sheep was stolen in 1801. Closer to home, a sheep was stolen from Thomas Gale of Ashe, yeoman, in 1775; two fat hogs were 'stolen from out of the hog stye of Hugh Digweed, of Steventon, Hants, and drove away in the night of Friday the 15th of December 1786' (a reward of ten guineas was offered)[7]; some turkeys from Mr Portal of Laverstoke in 1787 (Simon Dore was convicted of this offence at the Hampshire Epiphany Quarter Sessions of 1788 and sentenced to seven years' transportation. He was on the *Scarborough* in the second fleet to Botany Bay in January 1790 but apparently did not survive the voyage.[8]); a nag tail bay horse, a nag tail grey horse and a brown pony from the Revd George Lefroy of Ashe in 1788; a 'handsome ram lamb, the off-horn a little broken' from Mr Thomas Marshall at Deane in 1797; a large quantity of potatoes, three ducks and one fowl, from John Lovett esq of Overton in 1798; ten fowls and six ducks from Harry Digweed at Chawton in 1809.

The culprit in the latter instance was James Doe, aged 21 (a Mary Doe of Chawton is mentioned in two of Jane's letters in 1813) who was imprisoned for eighteen months and fined one shilling at the 1809 Lent Assizes. In 1832 another Chawton miscreant was treated less leniently; 26-year-old William Triggs (son of the gamekeeper Triggs of whom Jane Austen thought highly — in 1813 she ended a letter to Cassandra 'With Love to You all, including Triggs'[9] and in 1817 she wrote 'I can only be sure of *one* part being very handsome, Triggs himself, walking behind in his Green Coat'[10]) 'having... at the parish of Chawton, feloniously stolen a goose, of the value of 5/-, property of Benjamin Clement; also... one fowl, value 1/6, property of George Andrews and George Holt, was transported for seven years.

In the absence of regular or effective policing the successful apprehension of criminals was largely dependent on informers who were enticed by the prospect of monetary reward. Although numerous Associations (e.g. the 'Overton Association for the Prevention of Thefts and Felonies, and for prosecuting Offenders', to which Jane's father may well have belonged) were formed by the gentry and farmers of country districts in the 1780s and 1790s, their methods were no different; they simply spread the cost of the rewards and legal fees among their subscribers. A common ploy was to encourage offenders to betray each other. When Hugh Digweed offered ten guineas after the theft of his fat hogs, the notice continued: 'And if any one of the offenders will make a discovery of his or her accomplices, so that they may be brought to justice, he shall be intitled to the same reward and a free pardon.'

Rewards were usually substantial. On 25 August 1794 the *Reading Mercury* reported: 'On Monday last, about two o'clock in the afternoon, a hay-rick, at

Hyde-Farm at Itchinswell, Hants, the property of Mr Hugh Digweed, of Steventon, was discovered to be on fire, which communicated to and totally destroyed three others adjoining, also a wheat rick, the barns, which were full of corn, the dwelling-house, stables, and all the other out-buildings. It being supposed that the premises were maliciously set on fire, a reward of 200£ is offered for the discovery of the perpetrators.'[11] (Half the sum was put up by the Sun Fire Office.)

Sporting dogs were also a popular target for rural villains. Among the Austens' acquaintance to suffer were Jane's cousin Edward Cooper whose pointer Tasso was abducted from Sonning in 1793; John Limbrey (called Mr 'Limprey' in Jane's letter of 1 September 1796) of Hoddington, near Basingstoke (a pointer Venus, also in 1793); William Chute of The Vyne (a terrier Phil in 1795); Harris Bigg Wither of Manydown (a greyhound Fly in 1797); and Thomas Clement of Alton (a pointer Carlo in 1800). Some, perhaps most, missing dogs were lost and illegally detained by their finders rather than directly stolen. Rewards offered for their recovery ranged from half a guinea to five guineas. A frequent practice of 'finders' was to hold out for a larger reward; Edward Cooper, among others, hoped to forestall any such intention by adding to the notice advertising his loss, 'N.B. No further reward will be offered.'

Instances of more serious crime were rare. The few murders in Hampshire during Jane's lifetime nearly all occurred in the Portsmouth area, though one pathetic exception took place at Baughurst in 1791 when Mary Taylor was charged with the murder of her five-year-old stepson. In the following year George Webb, a baker of North Warnborough, stabbed William Brown, a bailiff who was attempting to arrest him at Odiham, 'with a large knife, in so terrible a manner that his life is despaired of'. Found guilty at the Summer Quarter Sessions, he was sentenced to two years imprisonment and required to find security for seven years to keep the peace. Another charge of stabbing was preferred against James Baigen, the ten-year-old son of William and Elizabeth Baigen of Chawton, in 1814, but the boy was acquitted Several references to this case appear in Jane's letters.[12]

House-breaking was also an unusual event in north Hampshire. Owners of houses which contained anything worth stealing generally kept dogs, employed servants and possessed firearms which they were positively encouraged to use against intruders. A rare instance occurred on the night of 24 June 1797 at Basing Park which was let to Thomas Coulthard (he afterwards rented Chawton House from Jane's brother Edward). The haul consisted of a large quantity of silver cutlery valued at £100 and a reward of thirty guineas was offered which resulted in the arrest of Richard Carlton Knowles. Knowles was tried and convicted at the Summer Assizes a few weeks later and hanged at Winchester at the beginning of August.

The crime most often associated with the eighteenth century is probably highway robbery – and with good reason, for scarcely an issue of a newspaper came out without some report of it, though seldom in Hampshire. The most popular locations in southern England were Hounslow Heath, Blackheath and Maidenhead Thicket, the latter only a few miles from the home of Jane's uncle and aunt Leigh Perrot. Highway robbery seems to have reached a peak in about 1798 when it was reported:

'The roads in the neighbourhood of Maidenhead, having for some time past been so much infested with highwaymen and footpads, that it became dangerous to travel in the evening, the cavalry of that town came to the laudable resolution of mounting guard in rotation and of patrolling the roads the greater part of the night, where these villains haunted, since which there has not been a robbery committed.'[13] But three weeks later 'no fewer than sixteen post-chaises were stopped on Hounslow heath in three evenings last week'.

Two or three raids would often be carried out by the same gang in one evening. Henry M'Allester and Archibald Girdwood were hanged in 1775 for three robberies on the same night, one of their victims being Johann Christian Bach; another, Thomas Gainsborough. No one who travelled the roads was ever entirely safe; even members of the royal family were robbed on more than one occasion between Windsor and London. When Jane Austen wrote to Cassandra on the completion of a journey 'nothing occurred to *alarm* or delay us', or 'Our journey here was perfectly free from accident *or event*'[14] it was not just freedom from the minor upsets of coach travelling, common though accidents were, to which she referred.

Some highwaymen achieved fame, and a certain amount of glamour was attached to their exploits, at least by the non travelling populace. (A particular favourite of the 1790s was called *Darcy Wentworth!*) Their victims were so numerous that most remained anonymous, for the newspapers seldom bothered to publish their names unless they appeared as witnesses in court. The few among the Austens' acquaintance who have been identified – there must have been many more – were: the Revd John Craven (uncle of Martha and Mary Lloyd), between Reading and Newbury in 1776; the Very Revd Thomas Powys, Dean of Canterbury (the subject of an article by Maggie Lane in the Society's *Report* for 1993), on Hounslow Heath in 1797 'by several footpads, who robbed him of three 25£ notes, and a King James's Guinea'[15]; and the Revd Charles Powlett of Winslade, on the Bagshot road in 1798, who forfeited a gold watch and his purse. In 1805 'Mark Lee and Arthur Smith, two gipsies, were apprehended on Monday last.... They were strongly suspected of having robbed Mr. Budd and another person on the highway in the neighbourhood of Alton.'[16] Indicted at the Hampshire Epiphany Sessions of 1806 with being 'rogues and vagabonds, and not giving a good account of themselves', they were discharged.

While it cannot be claimed that any of the foregoing incidents would have affected Jane Austen's day-to-day life, this is not true of a series of events which happened during the summer of 1793. On 19 August in that year the *Reading Mercury* reported that 'many robberies have of late been committed in and about the neighbourhood of Overton, in the county of Southampton, by a person, supposed to be a stranger'. Details of three were given. At about ten o'clock at night on 6 June the carriage of the Austens' friend and neighbour Wither Bramston was stopped at Hyde Hill, near Overton, and the two ladies inside (unnamed, but one presumably Mrs Bramston) were robbed of eleven or twelve guineas. On 5 July, again at about ten o'clock, 'a servant of the Rev. Mr. Lefroy [of Ashe] was attacked by the same person in Kingsdown Lane, the road leading to Kingsclere and Newbury [from

Overton], and who, on making some resistance, was much beaten with a bludgeon'. On 12 July a Mrs Trevor of Lower Seymour-street, London, with two other ladies, 'travelling in their own carriage, were stopped in the vicinity of Popham-lane, by a man in a smock frock, with a handkerchief or crape over his face, and armed with pistols, who robbed them of nine guineas, their gold watches, and ear-rings from their ears, value together about 100£. The villain came out of Popham wood, and tied his horse to a gate, whilst he committed the robbery.'[17]

'The person supposed to have committed these robberies has been seen hovering about the neighbourhood of Overton for several weeks past, and is supposed to have sheltered himself principally in the adjacent woods. He is a stout lusty man about 35 years of age, from five feet eight to ten inches high, darkish hair, not tied, pale sodden complexion, roundish face, with high cheek bones, flattish in front, and long nose, not very aquiline; he has generally been seen in a dark coloured coat, a cross barr'd flowered linen or cotton waistcoat, dark ribb'd corduroy breeches, light blue ribb'd stockings, half boots and a round high crowned hat. Has generally had with him another coat of a darkish colour, like a great coat; and a bundle in a diamond spotted handkerchief, supposed to contain a round frock; he has a singularity in his walk, as if he had been lamed, and speaks quick; he neither talks nor appears like a countryman, but rather like a man who has been in some business, or in a gentleman's service.'[18]

By the middle of August, after the neighbourhood had been terrorised for some two and a half months, 'Notice is hereby given, particularly to all innkeepers and publicans in the said neighbourhood, that whoever will discover the person guilty of these depredations, shall, on his conviction, receive a reward of 40£ over and above what is allowed by Act of Parliament, on applying to Mr. Greene, attorney at law, Basingstoke.'[19] The culprit was never caught but the offer of a large reward seems to have succeeded in driving him away, as his activities ceased after this date.

The effect of this unpleasant episode in the summer of 1793 on the family at Steventon parsonage (none of Jane's brothers was at home, and her father was then past sixty) can only be guessed at, but it undoubtedly caused consternation and alarm in the surrounding countryside. The knowledge that such a man was lurking in the nearby woods, watching for opportunities to pounce, must have invested even short coach journeys with heightened apprehension, and perhaps curtailed Jane and Cassandra's walks. It serves as another reminder that the tranquillity which is often supposed to have surrounded the life of Jane Austen was not always unbroken.

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Notes

1 *Reading Mercury* 17 Jan 1780, 3, col 3.
2 *ibid* 16 March 1789, 2, col 4.
3 *Jackson's Oxford Journal* 10 March 1759, 3, col 2.
4 *Reading Mercury* 7 Sept 1772, 3, col 1.
5 *ibid* 3 May 1779, 3, col 3.
6 *ibid* 10 Feb 1772, 1, col 4.

7 *ibid* 1 Jan 1787, 3, col 3.
8 Margaret Spence, *Hampshire and Australia, 1782-1791: Crime and Transportation* (Hampshire County Council, 1992) p. 20.
9 Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1995), p. 224.
10 *ibid* p. 336.
11 *Reading Mercury* 25 Aug 1794, 3, col 2.
12 For further details see "Some Unexplained References in Jane Austen's Letters"; *Notes and Queries*, Vol 239 (1994), pp. 320-321.
13 *Reading Mercury* 29 Oct 1798, 3, col 2.
14 *Letters* p. 39 and p. 81.
15 *The Times* 1 Jan 1798, 3, col d.
16 *Hampshire Chronicle* 16 Dec 1805, 4, col 4.
17 *Reading Mercury* 22 July 1793, 3, col 3.
18 *ibid* 19 Aug 1793 2, col 5.
19 *ibid.*



From *The Ranks in Life: for the Amusement and Instruction of Youth* (1821).

The geographical settings of Pride and Prejudice

The Hertfordshire location of Meryton, Longbourn, and the town of — — — is only very casually mentioned by Jane; the county is not given until Chapter 3, and it is not until practically the end of the story, Chapter 46, that Longbourn is specified as lying within ten miles of the Great North Road through Barnet and Hatfield. Dr Chapman pointed out that Jane could have envisaged Meryton and the town of —— as being either Hemel Hempstead and Watford, or else Ware and Hertford, according to whether they were on the east or west side of the main road.[1]

Two further facts, which have only been noticed in more recent years, suggest that the choice between these towns can now be decided. Mr Austen's second cousin the Revd Thomas Bathurst, who had been curate of Steventon from 1754-64, became rector of Welwyn, Herts, in 1765, and remained there until his death in 1797.[2] Welwyn is only six miles to the west of Hertford, and during the winter of 1794-95 the Derbyshire Militia were quartered in Hertford and Ware.[3] It may well be that Mr Bathurst wrote to his Austen cousins expressing an elderly cleric's disapproval of the social and moral problems that always arose when the militia arrived in the neighbourhood, thus providing the young Jane with the idea for the initial setting of *First Impressions.*

The possibility that the Chevening estate in Kent might have been the model for Rosings Park and Hunsford Parsonage was persuasively argued by the late Sir David Waldron Smithers, on the assumption that Jane could have visited Chevening during her trip to Kent in the summer of 1796.[4] However there seems no valid reason why she should have made such a visit – still less stayed in the rectory for some weeks, as Sir David goes on to suggest. The Revd John Austen (1777-1851) of the Kippington branch of the family, and therefore a second cousin of Jane, did not become rector of Chevening until 1813; in 1796 the living was held by the Revd Samuel Preston, a Cambridge graduate and therefore unlikely to be known to Jane's father or any other of the Hampshire Austens, who were Oxford graduates. In this case it seems far more likely that Jane's mental images of Lady Catherine de Bourgh's domain were created from houses and estates in the Goodnestone/Rowling area of Kent.

DEIRDRE LE FAYE

Notes

1 *P&P* (OUP, 3rd edn R.W. Chapman, repr. 1967), 10, 274-75, 416.

2 W.A.W. Jarvis, 'The Revd Thomas Bathurst', Jane Austen Society *Report* for 1978, and *Collected Reports 1976-1985,* pp 80-82.

3 John Breihan and Clive Caplan, 'Jane Austen and the Militia' in *Persuasions* No. 14 (1992), 16-26.

4 Sir David Waldron Smithers, *Jane Austen in Kent* (Westerham 1981), 37-56 on Chevening.

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Dr ALUN DAVID

Notes on sales 1996

Note: I am now including the references, where relevant, from David Gilson, *A bibilography of Jane Austen*, 1982; 1997.

First and early editions

Sense and Sensibility Lot 125 in the Sotheby sale of 16-17 December was the first edition of 1811 (Gilson A1), vols 1 and 2 lacking half-titles and tps and all vols lacking final blanks, foxed throughout, with occasional tears, in contemporary half-calf, somewhat worn. It failed to reach its estimate of £1500-£2000. Three sets of the second edition, 1813 (Gilson A2), appeared during the year. Lot 132 in the Bloomsbury Book Auctions sale of 7 March, estimate £400-£600, sold for £713; this set had tp torn and repaired, lacked half-titles and final blanks in each volume and was browned throughout. MacDonnell Rare Books of Austin, Texas, offered a fine set in contemporary three-quarter tan calf, tooled in blind and lettered in gilt, and marbled boards, with all half-titles present, for $6500; and James Burmester (catalogue 31) had a set for £2000, lacking half-titles, moderately foxed and in contemporary half-calf with renewed labels.

The 1833 Bentley edition (Gilson D1) in contemporary half-calf and with an additional printed title was offered with five other items in the Bloomsbury Book Auctions sale of 30 May (lot 47). Estimated at £100-£150 this sold for £57. Ian Hodgkins & Co (catalogue 85) had a copy of the first American edition, Philadelphia, 1833 (Gilson B6) for £2500; this was in poor condition original cloth, badly foxed.

Pride and Prejudice An imperfect set of the first edition, 1813 (Gilson A3), in 19th-century half-calf, rebacked, sold for £460 (estimate £400-£500) in the Bloomsbury Book Auctions sale of 25 April (lot 329). Vol. 1 lacked all before B2, vol.2 lacked the half-title, and vol. 3 all before B2 and K3-10 (all supplied in facsimile). Their sale of 30 May offered a much better set (lot 145), in slightly later half-calf, foxed and lacking half-titles. The estimate of £4000-£5000 was exceeded by the hammer price of £6320. The second edition, 1813 (Gilson A4), was lot 102 in the Bloomsbury sale of 11 January. This was an imperfect set, lacking vol. 3, but in original boards and uncut, with some contemporary pencil scribbling on the front endpapers. This, with 2 other items, sold for £253, the estimate being £200-£300. Maggs Bros Bulletin no 2 offered a set for £1800, bound in later full morocco, without half-titles. The same catalogue offered the third edition 1817 (Gilson A5), without half-titles, bound in contemporary brown polished calf, for £1400. James Burmester (catalogue 31) also had a copy in contemporary half-calf with some waterstaining for £600. Richard Bentley's 1839 edition (not in Gilson) was also in Maggs Bulletin No 2 for £350, in the original scarlet cloth decorated in blind on both panels and gilt on the spine.

Mansfield Park The *Antiquarian Book Monthly Review* reported a sale of the first edition 1814 (Gilson A6) on 8 February at the Swann Galleries, USA, for

$1900 – 60% of a low estimate. The Bloomsbury sale of 30 Mayhad, at lot 146 a set lacking half-titles, te final blank in vol. 2 and the final advert. leaf in vol. 3, in slightly later calf. Estimate £3000-£4000; hammer price £3910. Ian Hodgkins (catalogue 85) had Richard Bentley's 1833 edition (Gilson D3) for £265, in green half-calf with marbled boards, lacking the half-titles.

Emma The only edition noted this year appeared in Henry Sotheran, Piccadilly Notes no. 35. This was the first edition of 1816 (Gilson A8), rebound in a 'sympathetic modern binding" by Bernard Middleton in full calf without half-titles offered for £6500.

Northanger Abbey and *Persuasion* Burmester's catalogue 31 offered the first edition, 1818 (Gilson A9), in contemporary half-calf, spines gilt, some spotting throughout, for £3500. Ian Hodgkins (catalogue 85) offered the 1837 Richard Bentley edition (Gilson D4) for £175; this was in half green calf with marbled boards.

Persuasion The first American edition, Philadelphia 1832 (Gilson B3), was offered by MacDonnell Rare Books for $1850. This was in original quarter purple muslin and buff boards, uncut, with a contemporary ownership inscription Ian Hodgkins (catalogue 85) offered Charles Beecher Hogan's copy of this edition for £3750, with the original purple cloth faded to brown. This copy is mentioned on page 109 of David Gilson, *A Bibliography of Jane Austen* (1982; 1997).

Collected editions

A set of the first collected edition in the 'Standard Novels' series, published in five volumes by Richard Bentley in 1833 (Gilson D6) was lot 124 in the Sotheby sale of 16-17 December. Estimated at £800-£1000 it sold for £2400. Although it was in its original green cloth, David Gilson, who saw it prior to the sale, reports that all volumes were worn and rubbed and vol. 3 completely loose in its cover.

Other material

Lot 133 in the Sotheby sale of 11 July was an approximately 70-page manuscript biographical memoir of Jane Austen's brother Francis, written about 1863 in two hands, the second taking over in mid-sentence. It gave an account of Sir Francis's upbringing and career, ending with the words 'He is now senior Admiral of the Red'. The estimate £5000-£6000 but it failed to sell. James Burmester (catalogue 31) had an item with an interesting provenance. This was Hannah More's 'Hints towards forming the character of a young princess', (London, 1805). The tp of vol. 2 bore the ownership inscriptions 'E. Austen 1806' and 'Mrs J B Campion'. This Elizabeth was the wife of the Revd George Austen's cousin Francis Motley Austen of Kippington. Their daughter Jane married W.J. Campion.

CHRISTINE PENNEY

Jane Austen, Coleridge and Geopolitics

The recent huge expansion of interest in Jane Austen has again, and more persistently than ever, raised the question: why do not her novels touch on the great events of her time, and in particular the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars through which she lived? The same question is asked, perhaps more naively, about the work of Coleridge, the other great writer of the age. For reasons which will shortly become clear, I would like to deal with both these writers together. Coleridge was born in 1772 and Jane Austen three years later. She was 13 and he was 16 when the Bastille fell in July 1789 and inaugurated one of the most fascinating and bloody epochs in world history. She was 39 and he was 42 when the crowning mercy of the great British victory of Waterloo, in June 1815, hustled Bonaparte, the prototype of the modern totalitarian dictator, off the world stage and into exile in St Helena. Virtually her entire career as a novelist, and effectively all Coleridge's career as a poet, coincided with this colossal world war and its ramifying consequences in the lives of contemporaries. Yet who would gather, reading *Pride and Prejudice* or *The Ancient Mariner, Mansfield Park* or *Kubla Khan*, that a military and ideological struggle for the mastery of the world was taking place while they were being composed?

I hasten to add that not everyone takes the view that Jane Austen avoided the great issues of her day. One or two ingenious critics go to the opposite extreme. Professor Edward Said of Columbia University, who specialises in the impact of the West on the East, two or three years ago published a book called *Culture and Imperialism*, in which his object was to show that many Western artists, including Verdi, Conrad and Albert Camus, were consciously or unconsciously ideologists of imperialism, which he defines narrowly as oppression of non-white peoples by Europeans. And into this category he puts *Mansfield Park*, begun in 1811 and first published in 1814. This is Jane Austen's most ambitious novel, and in some ways her best. Indeed the first 3,000 words of the book, in which she sets the scene and engages our sympathy for her little heroine, Fanny Price, are of wonderfully sustained power, Austen at her most brilliant, and written, I should imagine, at a single sitting. In this novel Austen attempts something of immense difficulty; to demonstrate, carrying the reader's approval with her, how an unattractive heroine, who is physically weak, shy and prim, but obstinately courageous and great-hearted, contrives slowly to make herself the most powerful force in a household of her social superiors. The work has always aroused strong feelings of approval and disapproval, and Professor Said is shrewd enough to acknowledge its force. In my innocence, I had always assumed that its theme was the struggle for power, virtue and happiness within a family. No, argues the Professor. The novel is really about colonialism, the slave-trade and sugar plantations in Antigua. Indeed, if I read him aright, he thinks it should actually have been set in Antigua.

I like to think of the fun Jane Austen would have had with the Professor's solemn didacticism. It was one of her most cherished artistic principles, which

she observed however great the temptation to depart from it, only to deal with subjects she knew intimately and intuited strongly. The role of Antigua, which is briefly mentioned in *Mansfield Park*, is entirely fortuitous, as any sensible and unobsessed reader immediately sees. The author needs to move Sir Thomas Bertram off the stage of Mansfield Park, and keep him away long enough for the younger members of his household to get themselves into interesting tangles without his supervision. So she endows him with a West Indian estate, and imagines a crisis there which demands his personal attention. The most perfunctory research enabled me to discover why she picked on Antigua for the machinery of her plot. When her father was still alive, he took resident pupils at his rectory. Among them was the heir to an estate on the island, and young Jane doubtless talked to the youth about it. So the professor's thesis on Austen crumbles into dust the moment it is touched by reality, rather like Miss Havisham's wedding-cake.

However in his ignorance Professor Said missed an important trick which might have given a little more substance to his conspiracy theory. On 24 January 1813 Jane Austen included in a letter to her sister Cassandra the following remarks: 'I am reading... an Essay on the Military Police and Institutions of the British Empire, by Capt. Pasley of the Engineers, a book which I protested against at first, but which upon trial I find delightfully written & highly entertaining. I am as much in love with the Author as I ever was with Clarkson or Buchanan, or even the two Mr Smiths of the city. The first soldier I ever sighed for; but he does write with extraordinary force & spirit.' So Jane Austen was an imperialist after all! For Pasley's book, first published in November 1810, has some claims to be considered the earliest work of geopolitics ever written, and certainly the first full treatment of the military and political case for expanding the British Empire. It created a sensation when it came out, and ran through four editions in no time. George Canning, recently Foreign Secretary, gave it an enthusiastic (albeit anonymous) notice in the *Quarterly Review*. Not least, Captain Pasley was a dear friend of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, with whom he often talked over his geopolitical ideas, and the arguments of the book were hotly discussed in Coleridge's circle. So let us turn to Coleridge and Pasley for a moment.

There has been so much criticism of Coleridge's lethargy, and his inability to get things done, that we tend to forget how much he did do, and how many different aspects of life he involved himself in. By the time he was thirty, in 1802, he had been a scholar, a soldier in the cavalry, a Unitarian preacher and a public lecturer on politics and literature; he had founded and disbanded a Utopian socio-political movement, written with Robert Southey a verse-play, helped Wordsworth to create a new school of romantic poetry, taken part with Sir Humphrey Davy in a series of new chemical and therapeutic experiments, created and edited a new periodical, *The Watchman*, studied and begun to introduce into England the new movement in German idealist philosophy, and, let us not forget, turned himself into an outstanding journalist.

From 1799 and for many years afterwards, Coleridge had a professional relationship with Daniel Stuart (1766-1846), one of the leading editor-proprietors

in the first great age of British journalism. Stuart bought the derelict *Morning Post* in 1795 and quickly quadrupled its circulation, mainly by finding excellent writers. His greatest discovery was Coleridge, whom he employed as his main leader-writer, especially on foreign policy. He discovered an important fact about Coleridge: that whereas he was dilatory and unreliable if left to his own devices to compose poetry, he was a highly productive writer under pressure of a deadline. In the first five months of the year 1800, for instance, he wrote 76 leaders for the *Post* – longer ones than today's – as well as covering all-night sittings at the House of Commons. Stuart rated him the best leader-writer of the day: 'To write the leading [article] of a newspaper I would prefer [Coleridge] to [Sir James] Mackintosh, [Edmund] Burke, or any man I ever heard of. His observations were not only confirmed by good sense, but displayed extensive knowledge, deep thought and well-grounded foresight: they were so brilliantly ornamented, so classically delightful. They were the writings of a Scholar, a Gentleman and a Statesman'. So pleased was Stuart with Coleridge that he wanted to employ him full time on the *Post* and on his evening paper, the *Courier*, with a half-share of the equity and payments amounting to the then enormous sum of £2,000 a year.

It says a lot for Coleridge's artistic integrity that he turned down this handsome offer because he realised that full-time journalism would effectively prevent him from writing poetry. His idea was to confine his newspaper work to a few months a year, to support himself and family, and thus to win time to carry on his imaginative and philosophical work. In the event, his growing addiction to opium prevented him from pursuing any of his avocations with the persistence and industry they needed. But he did not lose his zest for fresh work and sensations. In the spring of 1804, partly to recover his health in a warm climate, partly to see the Mediterranean and Italy, and partly also to obtain employment, he sailed to Malta, where he succeeded in becoming secretary to the British plenipotentiary there, Sir Alexander Ball (1757-1809).

Coleridge was in Malta for the next two years, thereby positioning himself at the epicentre of the geopolitical and imperial earthquake which constituted the second phase of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The Treaty of Amiens had been signed on 27 March 1802 on the basis that both Bonapartist France and Britain would relinquish some of the conquests they had acquired during the first phase. Britain agreed that Malta should be occupied by Neapolitan troops, and that her own garrison would withdraw. Ball was sent out to arrange the evacuation. But it soon became clear that Bonaparte was not to be trusted and was pursuing his expansionist schemes particularly in the Mediterranean, with an eye on Egypt and the route to India. At the same time he was building up a force in the Pas de Calais area whose only purpose must be a direct invasion of England. The British were divided on how they should respond but they plainly could not ignore Bonaparte's actions. As Admiral Nelson put it in a memorable saying, 'It matters not at all in what way I lay this poker on the floor. But if Bonaparte should say it must be placed in this direction we must instantly insist upon its being laid in some other one.'

In February 1803 Bonaparte dealt a final blow to peace with what was known as

the Act of Mediation, which brought the Swiss Republic under French control. It was the French occupation of Switzerland which finally turned William Wordsworth, a passionate admirer of the independent spirit of the Swiss mountaineers, away from his revolutionary youth and towards a growing conviction that French expansion had to be resisted, if necessary by war. Coleridge had already moved in that direction. As France refused to carry out the terms of the Treaty, or to evacuate Switzerland, the British evacuation of Malta was suspended and on 16 May 1803 war was declared. At the same time Nelson was appointed commander of the Mediterranean fleet, with orders to keep the French naval forces bottled up in Toulon. A year later, on 17 May 1804, William Pitt replaced Addington in order to pursue the war more vigorously, and the following day a naval convoy, with Coleridge on board, came in sight of Malta harbour.

As secretary to Ball, Coleridge was put right at the centre of the complex military and political strategy of the Mediterranean campaign. The French object was somehow to outfox Nelson, concentrate their fleets and the fleets of their ally Spain, sail them into the English Channel, and thus cover the embarkation of the enormous French army into flat-bottomed boats, which would land it in southern England. Once England was subdued, Bonaparte would be master of the world. British strategy was to frustrate this plan, either by keeping the enemy fleets trapped in harbour, or by destroying them both at sea – a strategy triumphantly accomplished in the autumn of the following year, with Nelson's decisive victory over the combined Franco-Spanish fleet at Trafalgar.

In Malta Coleridge soon met and made close friends with a 25-year-old soldier deeply involved in this land-and-sea strategy, a man whom he described as 'a gallant officer who to eminence in professional science... adds all the accomplishments of a sound scholar and the powers of a man of genius.' This was Captain Charles William Pasley, author of the book which delighted Jane Austen. Who was Pasley? He was the brilliant product of an age which has never been matched for producing so many self-made men (and women) of stature. Born in Dumfriesshire of humble stock, he was such a clever boy that at 8 he could translate the Greek Testament. At 12 he wrote a history of the local wars of gangs of boys, which he put into Latin in the style of Livy. An artilleryman at the age of 16 in 1796, he quickly transferred to the Engineers, which offered more opportunities for his ingenuity. He eventually became their colonel, commandant and a full general. He had already seen active service in the Mediterranean, Italy, Spain and the Low Countries, mainly as a siege-and-explosives expert. He virtually invented the science of military engineering, so far as the British were concerned, as they had always lagged behind the French in this field.

Coleridge found Pasley in the thick of adventurous schemes for containing French geopolitical aggression. The Captain had already visited Egypt and the other key base of Minorca. For Nelson he had carried out a military survey of Sardinia, with a view to defending the island – needed as a forward naval base for the blockade of Toulon – against a French attack from Corsica. Ball had also used him to set up a regular supply of timber from Sicily to Malta, so that Nelson's

fleet could be maintained and repaired on the spot. In addition, Pasley, who was already planning his book, had learned two Mediterranean languages and built up a library of maps and documents on the area. On all this, of course, Coleridge fell with avidity, just as he had fallen on the library Tom Poole had collected in Nether Stowey. Pasley, like Humphrey Davy, was exactly the kind of man Coleridge loved to be with – someone with huge and varied technical knowledge, a firm grounding in the classics, and a passion for modern literature, including poetry.

Together, the two young men ranged over Malta and discussed its history, topography and strategic importance. Together they visited southern Italy. Pasley helped Coleridge with a number of political papers he prepared for Ball and the British government – his 'Political Sketch of the Views of the French in the Mediterranean', for instance, his 'Observations on Egypt', his arguments about the importance of Malta and its retention by Britain as a naval base. Under Pasley's influence, and as a result of his own reading and observation, he became in many ways an early imperialist – he thought, for instance, that Britain could bring improvement and enlightenment to Egypt and its people: 'hats instead of turbans' as he put it. It is a pity, in a way, that Professor Said lacked the nous to get onto Coleridge as a proponent of the culture of imperialism. He might then have been able to provide us with an exegesis of *Kubla Khan* as a proto-imperialist poem. The fact that it had already been written, though not yet published, by the time Coleridge got to Malta and met Pasley would not, I imagine, have caused the professor much difficulty.

For his part, Pasley recognised Coleridge as a man of extraordinary genius, a brilliant conversationalist and an entertaining companion. He also saw him as a useful contact by virtue of his journalistic connections. Pasley was already convinced that if Britain was to restrain and contain Bonaparte, and impose a permanent peace based on the balance of power – Pasley, having seen a great deal of warfare and slaughter, was strongly anti-war – then it had to take its imperial responsibilities more seriously and systematically. He was working on the ideas which led up to the book Jane Austen admired but he was anxious to get some of them published straightaway, before foolish and ill-informed politicians in London took the wrong decisions. One of his objects was to stress the suitability of Malta as a main British naval base in the centre of the Mediterranean, and to scotch a half-baked plan to exchange it for the island of Lampedusa. He thought this little island useless, and set out his arguments in a powerful *Essay on Lampedusa*. It is clear from its style, and especially its figures of speech, that Coleridge collaborated in this work. Equally important, he was the means whereby it was transmitted to Stuart in London, and duly published, anonymously, in Stuart's paper, the *Courier*. The *Essay* served its purpose; Malta was retained and fortified, and thus Coleridge played some part in consolidating the key island as one of Britain's chief imperial bases for more than 150 years.

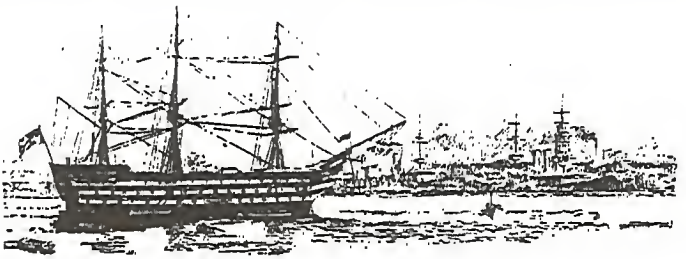
However, Pasley and Coleridge were not the only young men in the Mediterranean at this time. Jane Austen's surviving letters record with love, anxiety and wit the doings of her two naval brothers, Frank and Charles. Frank was a year

her elder, Charles four years younger. So Frank was used to help model the splendid character of Captain Frederick Wentworth, RN in *Persuasion*, an outstanding ship's commander who made his fortune from taking prizes. Charles, who in Jane Austen's eyes was always a little boy, became the model for Midshipman William Price, Fanny's adored brother in *Mansfield Park* whose youthful tales of the grand and terrible sights he had witnessed electrified the Mansfield Park circle when he came home on shore-leave, just as they had once electrified Jane Austen herself. Charles was serving in the Mediterranean fleet when Captain Pasley and Coleridge went out to Malta There is no evidence the three met but the midshipman had a successful cruise. When he returned to Portsmouth he immediately wrote to Jane to say that his share of prize-money from the capture of the French privateer La Furie came to £40. 'But' wrote Jane to Cassandra, 'of what avail is it to take prizes if he lays out the produce in presents to his sisters? He has been buying gold chains and Topaze crosses for us – he must be well scolded.' She uses this incident almost unchanged in Mans*field Park*, where William brings back from the Mediterranean for Fanny a Maltese cross on a gold chain which she proudly wears at the ball Sir Thomas Bertram gives in her honour. A jewel earned by the valour of a younger brother must have been indeed precious to a patriotic Englishwoman in those days.

Both brothers spent their entire long lives in the Royal Navy, and both died admirals. Between them they commanded, at one time or another, no less than 24 warships, some of them famous. Their lives criss-crossed with Nelson's at several points. Among Frank's commands was the *Elephant,* which had been Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Copenhagen. Charles rose to command the famous *Bellerophon.* This was originally a French battleship, which Nelson had captured at the Battle of the Nile. It was much like in the Royal Navy, where it was known as the 'Billy Ruffian', and it became famous for all time as the ship to which Bonaparte surrendered after the Battle of Waterloo. Charles died on active service during the Second Burmese War in 1852, aged 73. Frank survived till 1865, dying Admiral of the Fleet at the age of 91, having in his eighties turned down the appointment to the Portsmouth Command, which would have meant flying his flag in Nelson's *Victory.*

While Coleridge and Pasley were in Malta during the events which led up to Trafalgar, Captain Frank Austen was himself serving under Nelson in the Mediterranean Fleet. He was flag-captain to one of Nelson's favourite officers, Admiral Thomas Louis, who had saved Nelson's life at the Nile by drawing fire onto his own ship. Frank's command was a splendid 80-gun battleship, built by the French and named Le *Franklin* in honour of Benjamin Franklin, but captured at the Nile and re-named the *Canopus*. Jane Austen was later to bring the *Canopus* into *Mansfield Park* – she once apologised to Frank for using the names of his ships in her novels – but in 1804 she was concerned at the excitement and anxiety of the campaign in which Frank was taking part, which might bring him glory and/or death, as it did for Nelson himself. Hers and other letters allow us to trace what happened. Alongside Nelson's flagship, and standing second in line, Frank and his *Canopus* pursued Admiral Villeneuve's French fleet, which had escaped from

Toulon, in the longest chase of the war – 3,459 nautical miles to the West Indies, and 3,227 miles back. The *Canopus* then took station off Cadiz, where Frank Austen carefully studied the sheltering enemy fleet through his telescope: 'Their whole force', he wrote, 'consisted of thirty-three sail of the line and five frigates, all apparently quite ready for sea.' On 28 September Nelson with his fleet joined Frank's squadron off Cadiz, and immediately ordered the *Canopus* to Gibraltar to pick up much-needed water and stores. Frank's admiral, Louis, was dismayed: 'You are sending me away, my Lord. The enemy will come out and we shall have no share in the battle.' 'My dear Louis', said Nelson, 'I have no other means of keeping the fleet in provisions and water but by sending them in detachments to Gibraltar. The enemy will come out, and we shall fight them, but there will be time for you to get back first. I look upon *Canopus* as my right hand.' Frank was worried too. 'Having borne our share of a tedious chase and anxious blockade', he wrote home, 'it would be mortifying indeed to find ourselves at last thrown out of any credit or emolument which would result from an action.' In England, Jane and her family waited anxiously for the outcome. Alas for Frank's fears: the French noted that Nelson's force had been weakened by the detachment of *Canopus* and other



HMS Victory from Gosport, by Arthur B. Connor,
from D.H. Moutray Read, *Highways and Byways in Hampshire* (1919).

ships, and on 19 October they came out. Two days later the Franco-Spanish fleet was annihilated at Trafalgar and Nelson was killed. Hastening to rejoin the fleet, Frank knew the worst when he overtook a ship which reported that firing had been heard off Trafalgar 'for five hours'.

So Frank missed Trafalgar, but he later went on to win fame and fortune at the Battle of St Domingo. Jane Austen delighted in her brother's triumph, and in *Persuasion* she has her hero Wentworth promoted to commander for his merit at St Domingo – though his brother-in-law, Admiral Croft, is set down as a veteran 'of the Trafalgar action' Since Frank was not at Trafalgar, she thought rather too much was talked about it. In her last, incomplete, novel *Sanditon*, written after the great war was over, she has the enthusiastic seaside property speculator, Mr Parker, exclaim: 'One other hill brings us to Sanditon. You will not think I have made a bad exchange when we reach Trafalgar House -- which, by the bye, I almost wish had not named Trafalgar, for Waterloo is more the thing now.'

So both Coleridge, directly, and Jane Austen, through family ties, were involved in the 'real world' of geopolitics. It peeps out occasionally into their work and letters,

in *Mansfield Park*, as we have seen, in *Persuasion*, which might be described as a novel about what happened to naval officers when they were demobilised after peace broke out, and in *To France: An Ode*. Coleridge's poem is a protest against the French occupation of Switzerland and marks a point at which he swung round into a position of hostility towards French aggressive and expansive plans. And here it is worth pointing out that although to people like Professor Said 'imperialism' means oppression of non-whites by Europeans, to Coleridge and Jane Austen it meant something quite different. The Emperor they feared was Bonaparte, the imperialism they dreaded was French. For a great part of their lives, there was a real possibility of a French conquest of Britain. That was the menace which led so many of Coleridge's friends to join the militia and volunteers, whose officers delighted the younger Bennet sisters in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Indeed, the continuing risk of a French occupation was one of the main themes of Pasley's book. 'The British nation', Pasley wrote, 'is placed in a situation of danger, to which its past history affords no parallel – menaced with destruction by a much superior land force, which is directed by the energy of one of the greatest warriors that has appeared .... Nothing but our naval superiority has saved us from being at this moment a province of France.' He was particularly worried that the Americans might join the war on the side of France, as indeed happened in 1812. Hence the book which so delighted Jane Austen urged a systematic policy of containment. Britain should drop its purely negative and defensive policy of simply reacting to foreign threats. Instead it should devise a global strategy. 'War we cannot avoid; and in war we cannot succeed merely by displaying the valour, unless we also assume the ardour and ambition, of conquerors.' We should, he continued, annex Sicily, and so control the Mediterranean. We should consider a federal union with Sweden as a step to controlling the Baltic. The full resources of the Royal Navy and modern technology. – including the new explosive shells invented by his colleague Colonel Henry Shrapnel, and the long-range rockets now being produced by his friend William Congreve – should be deployed to establish total control of the Atlantic; and, if the Americans should join France, then we must use our power to conduct amphibious raids on the American coast.

Jane Austen was in broad agreement with the book. Robert Southey the poet laureate and Coleridge's brother-in-law, was enthusiastic. He read the book in 1813. By that time Britain and America were at war, and Southey strongly approved of the plan to bombard the American coast. If our peace terms were not accepted, he wrote to Sir Walter Scott, Britain should send a strong fleet to threaten American cities with a missile attack of big Congreve rockets. 'I would run down the [American Atlantic] coast and treat the great towns with an exhibition of rockets... [until] they chose to put a stop to the illuminations by submission – or till Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York, etc, were laid in Ashe'. He expanded on Pasley's imperialist views in an article in the *Quarterly Review*: 'I am as ardent for making the world English as can be', he wrote.

Wordsworth, however, refused to agree with Southey, at least so far as the missile attacks were concerned. He too read the book and wrote at length to Pasley

expounding his reactions to it. 'I wish to see', he wrote, 'Spain, Italy, France and Germany formed into independent nations: nor have I any desire to reduce the power of France further than may be necessary for that end... . My prayer, as a patriot, is that we may always have, somewhere or other, enemies capable of resisting us and keeping us at arm's length.' He persuaded Southey to see Pasley's policy not in terms of conquest but of emancipation – Britain using her power and technology to promote independent, constitutional governments all over the world, a far more humane as well as practical idea, soon to be pursued with great success by such Prime Ministers as Canning and Palmerston. That, I think, was also the spirit in which Jane Austen read the book.

She saw her two sailor brothers 'not as vaunting conquerors but as custodians of the constitutional liberties which England upheld everywhere. She was proud of them, and proud of her country; and towards the end of *Emma*, finished as the great war was drawing to a triumphant close, she included a quiet but memorable passage indicating how much England meant to her. Emma is taking part in the memorable picnic at Mr Knightley's house, Donwell Abbey, and she follows the avenue of limes which formed 'the finish of the pleasure-grounds'. The narration continues:

'...it was in itself a charming walk, and the view which closed it extremely pretty. The considerable slope, at nearly the foot of which the Abbey stood, gradually acquired a steeper form beyond its grounds; and at half a mile distant was a bank of considerable abruptness and grandeur, well clothed with wood;' and at the bottom of this bank, favourably placed and sheltered, rose the Abbey-Mill Farm, with meadows in front, and the river making a close and handsome curve around it.

'It was a sweet view – sweet to the eye, and the mind. English verdure, English culture, English comfort, seen under a sun bright, without being oppressive.'

A quintessentially and lovable English scene, such as Thomas Girtin or the young Turner, Jane Austen's contemporaries, might have painted. It must have seemed particularly dear to Jane Austen at this time because, when she wrote these words, Bonaparte had just escaped from Elba and was marching north to meet the English army under Wellington. The great war for the world, indeed, was seldom far from the background of the novels. Jane Austen, like Coleridge, was always part of the real world, and pondered its problems, though she did not shout out her answers to them.

There was another aspect of the real world about which, I think, Coleridge and Jane Austen – and, incidentally, Captain Pasley – were in agreement: the slave trade. Professor Said, by lumping in slavery with imperialism, assumes that if you were an imperialist you were also a slaver. But that is just ignorance of the historical facts. Some of the most dedicated enemies of the slave trade were the British imperialists, Pasley among them, and this was one point on which Coleridge and the captain were in total agreement. Coleridge, unlike the Utopian radicals from whom, by 1804, he was now parting company, did not believe man to be naturally good. He always accepted the reality of evil, as distinct from mere error, and this acceptance rightly tempered any optimism he might feel about the future

of mankind. He never fell into the crucial error, made so significantly by Shelley, and by his mentor William Godwin, and by so many continental idealists and their countless followers of loving mankind in general but treating human beings in particular with heartless contempt or cruelty. Coleridge saw personal affections as the key to any true humanitarianism. They expand, he wrote, 'like the circles of a Lake – the Love of our friends, parents and neighbours leads us to the Love of Country, to the Love of all Mankind. The intensity of private attachment encourages, not prevents, universal philanthropy.' So the individual, the object of love, had to be at the heart of any scheme for general improvement. Before he went to Malta, Coleridge's studies in Germany led him to derive from Kant the vital notion that a person should in no circumstances ever be treated as a thing. That, he concluded, was the fundamental objection to slavery. 'A Slave is a person perverted into a Thing', he wrote. 'Slavery, therefore, is not so properly a deviation from Justice as an absolute subversion of all morality.'

Among the British military men and administrators in the Mediterranean, Coleridge found a growing belief that the slave trade must be abolished. The Royal Navy in particular opposed the trade. Officers and ratings alike had strong personal feelings against slavers and the men who ran them. Admiral Nelson himself had a peculiar detestation of slavery. Commanding as he did a huge armament, doomed to spend many idle hours on blockade duty, he itched to hurl it against the notorious slave enclave of Algiers, where many thousands of slaves, of all colours, races and religions, were kept in confinement for sale. As Coleridge probably and Pasley certainly knew, Nelson had devised a plan to take Algiers by assault, calculating how many ships he would need. The assault actually took place in August 1816 – more than a decade after Nelson's death, being successfully led by his old colleague Edward Pellew, Lord Exmouth – though slavery was not actually wiped out in Algiers until the French occupied the country in 1830. However, the Navy began to satisfy its wish to be allowed to put down the slave-trade in 1807, when William Wilberforce finally got his famous Bill through Parliament. This was of particular interest to Jane Austen and her two naval brothers. Frank was a favourite of Nelson's, who thought him a very able young commander; but both Frank and Charles were particular protégés of Admiral Lord Gambier, who – as Jane Austen's letters show – had personally helped them to appointments and promotion. Gambier was an Evangelical, a close friend of Wilberforce, and an ardent anti-slaver.

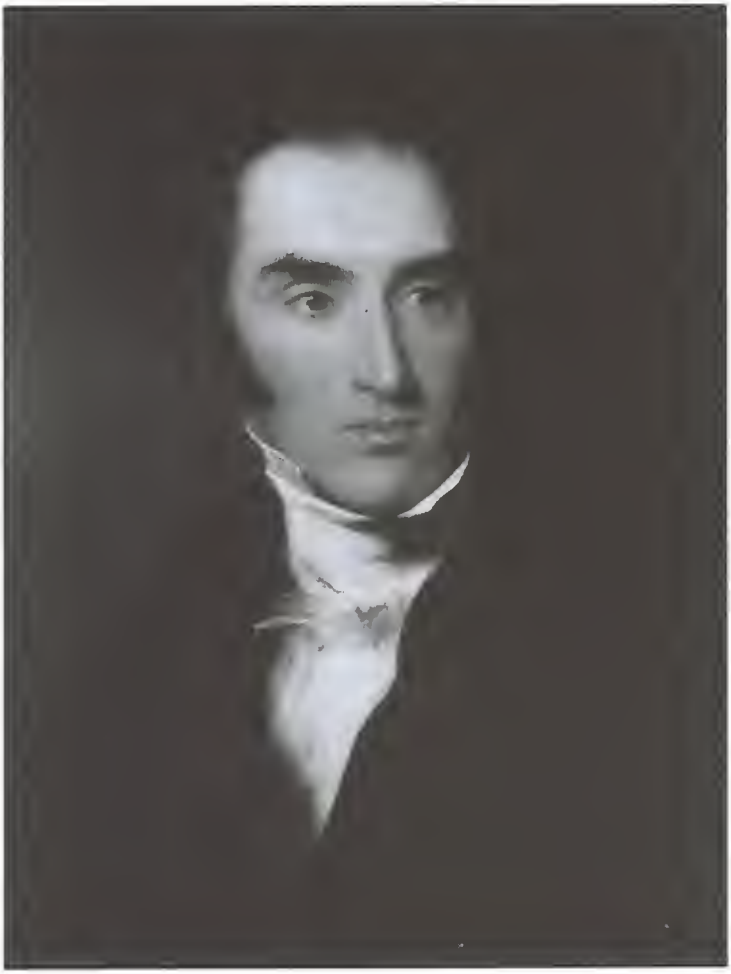
Jane Austen, like Coleridge, was more High Church than Evangelical. But on slavery I have no doubt she sided with Gambier and her brothers. As usual, however, she was discreet in her views about the real, as opposed to her own fictional, world. She has Sir Thomas Bertram in *Mansfield Park* go out to Antigua to make the adjustments to his estates rendered necessary by the Abolition Act of 1807, which was followed by the even stronger Enforcement Act. She doesn't actually tell us this: all she says is that Fanny asked intelligent questions about the issue of slavery and informed herself, as I am certain Jane Austen had already done. By the time she came to write *Emma,* the slave-trade had become so unpopular among 'right-thinking people' that even the odious Mrs Elton hastens to say that

her rich brother-in-law in Clifton is 'no friend of the trade' – a typical Jane Austen joke. It would have been a source of pride to Jane that her little brother, Charles, was actually given a naval command of what was termed 'slavery suppression', something Royal Naval officers carried out with zeal and even relish. As for Coleridge's argument against slavery, with her intense interest in human beings of every description, and her almost uncanny skill in putting them down on paper, Jane Austen would have been the last on earth to treat a person as a thing. She would have agreed with Coleridge wholeheartedly. So there we are. Jane Austen's novels appear, superficially, to show her leading a life wholly sheltered from the great events of her time, from the 'real world'. Coleridge, as he has come down to us in Thomas Carlyle's matchless description of him holding forth on metaphysics in Highgate, descanting on 'Ombjects' and 'Sumjects', also seems a bit remote from reality. In fact, as we have seen, they were as much part of the real world as anyone else, held rather similar views on it in many ways and those views made sound sense.

What became of the brilliant young Captain Pasley who delighted and impressed Jane Austen and Coleridge? Well, he flourished. For nearly thirty years he ran the Royal Engineers establishment at Chatham, being in due course knighted, becoming a lieutenant-general and colonel-commandant of his regiment – a very grand military personality indeed, a prominent member of the army establishment and a figure in London society. Alas, alas, his ideas aged along with his body. By the time the Crimean War came, in 1854-55, he had long since ceased to be the brilliantly innovative young officer with the latest notions on military technology and strategy, and had hardened into a red-faced old brass-hat of 74. He defended hotly the incompetent War Office handling of the Crimean campaign and furiously denounced *The Times* for criticising it. On 12 March 1855 *The Times* reported a speech he had made at a banquet, numbering him with 'angry officials, peevish partisans and stupid old ladies' and describing him as 'over his cups, drawing out the foolish old ideas that all the mistakes and disasters of the Peninsula [War] must be repeated in a war waged under totally different circumstances.' Ten days later, Charles Dickens, who knew him well, had dinner with him and reported sadly to Wilkie Collins: 'I dined with [General Pasley] yesterday who went perfectly mad at dinner about *The Times* – exudations taking place from his mouth while he denied all its statements. [The exudations] were partly foam and partly turbot with white sauce. He persisted likewise in speaking of [*The Times*] as "Him".' With age, we all of course move from the vanguard to the rearguard of ideas, and we may well wonder what Jane Austen herself, if she had lived, would have thought of the Crimean War, had she dined with Charles Dickens in 1855 — being by then an old lady of eighty. We do not know. Of one thing we can be sure: she would have kept her views to herself. Jane Austen did not believe that ladies should articulate their ideas on politics, let alone geopolitics. But that did not mean she did not possess them – and we can be confident they were pretty shrewd ideas, too.

PAUL JOHNSON

The Jane Austen Society



Mr John Plumptre

Report for 1997

The Jane Austen Society

Founded in 1940 by Miss Dorothy Darnell
Registered Charity No. 1040613

President Richard Knight

Vice-Presidents Elizabeth Jenkins, OBE, Nancy Lady Smiley

Chairman Brian Southam *Vice-Chairman* Alwyn Austen

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Committee Jean Bowden, Christopher Jarman, Gaye King, Maggie Lane, Deirdre Le Faye, Helen Lefroy, Louise Ross, Diana Shervington, Anthony Tilke, Anthony Trollope, Rosemary Trollope,
co-opted, William Ramsay, David Selwyn

Membership Secretary and database Rosemary Culley, 22 Belmont Grove, Havant PO9 3PU (e.mail rosemary @ sndc.demon.co.uk)

Accountants to the Society Messrs Sheen Stickland & Co, Alton

Contributions to the Report are welcome. They should be not more than 2,600 words, and should be based on original research into the life and times of Jane Austen, her family and friends, or places known to her.

Editor David Selwyn
Assistant editor Jill Gandy

Articles to be considered for publication in the *Report* should be sent to 8 Barrow Court, Barrow Gurney, Bristol BS48 3RW.

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Joint	£15	£18
Corporate	£30	£33

Life membership: UK £150; overseas £180

Cheques should be sent to the Membership Secretary at the address above. Members resident abroad are asked to pay subscriptions in sterling by means of a banker's draft. The society is unable to accept payment by credit card. Please add sterling £5 to foreign currency cheques.

Front cover: Portrait of John Plumptre (British School), which appears in the new edition of Almost Another Sister *by Margaret Wilson (George Mann Books), reproduced by kind permission of Mrs A.M. Plumptre.*

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From the Chairman

With the publication in 1997 of the fourth volume of *Collected Reports*, covering the years 1986-1995, we now have a permanent record of the Society's activities over the last fifty years; and, thanks to Miss Elizabeth Jenkins, the Introduction to the first volume provides an account which carries us back to the Society's earliest days and foundation in 1940. We are reminded of the enormous debt the Society owes both to its founders and to Sir Hugh and Lady Smiley in maintaining the Society's traditions and making possible the developments we have seen in recent years. While the Society now supports branches and groups throughout the United Kingdom and liaises with sister organizations overseas, its focus remains firmly at the heartland of Jane Austen – the village of Chawton, Chawton Cottage and the Great House.

For this reason, we attach particular value to our President's connection with Chawton House, both through his family associations and ownership and through his active role in the preparations for the Centre to be established there and in the restoration of the grounds. Members will be relieved to know that all the recent difficulties seem to have been overcome and that work on the house and the landscape restoration will now be able to advance unimpeded.

Equally, the Society enjoys a close relationship with the Memorial Trust, under the Chairmanship of Mr Carpenter, and we have welcomed his initiatives: in extending the range of musical evenings and other events at the Cottage; and in the recent schedule of period decoration and rearrangement within the Museum.

As to the village itself, our help has not been called for. But forty-five years ago, the Society played its part in stopping a bypass scheme which threatened to be disastrous for Chawton. We would certainly be prepared to act again in the event of such a threat returning.

In all this, the Society has a caring and custodial role. We are very conscious of our wider responsibilities as a charity, an organization dedicated to serving not only our membership but the public at large.

March 1998
BRIAN SOUTHAM

Mr John Plumptre

Mr John Plumptre (1791-1864) was the first serious suitor of Jane's niece, Fanny Knight. Jane's letters to Fanny in 1814 record wise advice as to whether she should encourage him or not. Jane liked 'Mr J P' and thought him handsome; this portrait shows that he was indeed good-looking and enables us to understand all the better why Fanny was attracted to him. But his puritanical views put Fanny off and the relationship came to an end. John Plumptre went on to marry Catharine Methuen of Wiltshire. He had a long career as an MP and continued to hold an extreme religious viewpoint throughout his whole life. He lived at Fredville, near Canterbury (a house which no longer survives), and came from a family whose roots were in Nottingham, where some streets and a charitable hospital still bear the family name.

MARGARET WILSON

The Annual General Meeting

Richard Knight, President, welcomed over 300 members to the morning session. The Chairman asked for the good wishes of the meeting to be conveyed to Alwyn Austen, Vice-Chairman, after his recent operation. Elizabeth Jenkins was unable to be present, but was writing her recollections of the early days of the Society for publication in the Report. 1996-97 had been another busy year for the Jane Austen media industry, and the Internet website featured 10,000 items. A party of 25 JASNA members was welcomed in June. Further negotiations were in progress to preserve the Revd George Austen's tombstone in Bath. A good working relationship had been maintained with the Jane Austen Memorial Trust which administers Jane Austen's House, and care is being taken to preserve the fabric of the building. The educational objectives stated in the Constitution were being pursued. Thanks were accorded to members of the Committee, and the continued active support of the President was acknowledged with gratitude.

The Honorary Secretary reported a total membership of 1962; this figure marked a falling off of temporary members who enrolled in 1995-96, perhaps in response to screen adaptations of the novels. 272 new members had registered, 42 from overseas; there were 9 new life members, 3 from overseas, and 27 resignations, 15 imposed by mortality. 1996-97 had been a year of consolidating advance in which the Oxford weekend conference in April had formed the centrepiece.

The Honorary Treasurer referred members to the financial statement in the Report which showed an increase in revenue from £15,000 to £25,000. Significant donations had been received to help defray costs of publications. These, together with a more efficient administration, had led to the record surplus. A good deal of the Revd George Austen's tombstone restoration fund had been spent, and money had been set aside for the future claims of life members. The Society was in good financial health. During the open forum Committee members responded to members' questions.

The President welcomed members and guests to the afternoon session. Many had travelled from overseas, including three representatives from the Centre for the Study of Early English Women's Writing. After a résumé of the progress of restoration of Chawton House and landscape, the Chairman was invited to brief the 650 strong audience on the morning session. A presentation was made to the retiring editor, Helen Lefroy.

Nigel Nicolson's address 'Was Jane Austen a snob?' was enthusiastically received, and David Selwyn, the new editor, proposed a vote of thanks. Thanks were also accorded to members of the Southern Circle for their stewardship. After tea, commemorative Evensong was celebrated by the Revd Ken Kelland.

SUSAN McCARTAN

NEWS FROM....

Jane Austen's House

Jane Austen's House has been open every day since the screening of *Pride and Prejudice* in October 1995, but eventually we *had* to close on weekdays in January and February 1997, so that the ground floor and the stairs could be re-decorated. Papered and painted thirteen years ago, the floors and the overall structure have been checked by experts, and their findings were very reassuring. We have had an oak platform made for the donkey carriage, to protect it from rising damp from the brick floor. Conservation and re-labelling of exhibits has continued, and all our sales, stocks and accounts have been computerised, which should make stocktaking much quicker in future.

We have bought a digital camera, so that as we put details of all the exhibits on to the computer, we can at the same time insert illustrations of every object. This is a mammoth task, but very worthwhile.

49,199 people visited the House in 1997, about 40% of them coming from overseas, including a group of Museum Curators from Russia who came to study British methods of conservation, and to learn about running museums on 'shoestring' budgets. A large party of members of the Jane Austen Society of North America visited Chawton as part of their strenuous 1997 tour of venues connected with Jane Austen. The weather was unkind, but did not dampen their enthusiasm.

Each Bank Holiday, to relieve congestion in the House, we laid on suitable entertainments and activities in the garden and the Granary. A group of Friends of the British Theatre, who raise funds to help young actors, visited the Museum in June to hear several members of staff talk about their work here. They also met 'Captain Wentworth' (Ciaran Hinds) and 'Anne Elliot' (Amanda Root) and Susie Conklin, the script editor of the recent television productions of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. It was one of the happiest days we have ever had.

Although Jane Austen's House should be closed on Boxing Day, we had an urgent request from a local hotel hosting Christmas visitors, wanting to bring a large group, as everywhere else was closed. We took pity on them, and in the end groups came from three hotels that morning, all in festive mood.

JEAN BOWDEN

Bath and Bristol

The year began with us as always with Cassandra's birthday tea at 4 Sydney Place, Bath, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Michael Davis. Michael told us of his researches into the history of the house; his talk is printed on page 29.

We had a happy return to Prior Park for our AGM in May. Guest speaker Professor Edward Copeland treated us to a most interesting lecture on shopping and the gentry from which we discovered that the cotton furnishings on Jane Austen's bed cost her father more than the wooden bed itself! High summer saw a large group of us descending on the village of Adlestrop in Gloucestershire with

its many Leigh connections. The present owners of Adlestrop House and Adlestrop Park allowed us to walk in their grounds; we also visited the church and had tea in the village hall.

One of our autumn events, a discussion of *Northanger Abbey,* was deferred to the summer but we spent an enjoyable evening in the home of Louise Ross playing card games under the direction of David Selwyn. Our attempts at Speculation were not only great fun in themselves but really helped us appreciate and admire the artistry of the scene in *Mansfield Park.* MAGGIE LANE

Birmingham

A study day on the theme of Jane Austen on screen was held at the University of Birmingham on 12 July. Keith Parsons and Dr Pamela Mason examined the various film and television adaptations of *Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Emma* and *Persuasion.* JULIE SHORLAND

Isle of Wight

In January one of our members, Brenda James, gave a lecture on 'Social history in Jane Austen's time'. In March another member, Sheri Bright, gave a talk on 'Gothic novels', illustrated with excerpts from the BBC video of *Northanger Abbey.* We met again in June for a discussion on *Persuasion.* Three of us attended the AGM at Chawton. It was a most enjoyable day and we determined to have a larger contingent in 1998. In September we watched and discussed portions of BBC adaptations of *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice. Sense and Sensibility*

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Book Shop

was the subject of discussion in November.

Mr D. Bradford, a descendant of the Knight family and longtime member of the Jane Austen Society, has kindly donated a copy of the Knight family tree to our group.

ELIZABETH DENNIS

Kent

At the AGM held at Tonbridge Parish Church in March, the editor of the News Letter, Helen Lefroy, gave a talk on the Lefroy family and its connection with the Austens. 60 people were present when members of JASNA joined the Kent Branch at Godmersham in June. Nigel Nicolson gave a guided tour of the house and garden followed by lunch and a performance of 'Jane Austen's History of England'. This was a great success and enjoyed by everyone.

In September we met for lunch at the Commissioner's House in Chatham Dockyard. This interesting house was used for many years by the Naval Officer in charge of the Dockyard. The Chairman of the Society, Brian Southam, gave a most interesting talk on Jane Austen and the navy. 45 members and friends were present for the annual dinner. The editor of the *Austen Family Verses*, David Selwyn, was the speaker. A dozen or so members met in April and November to discuss *Northanger Abbey* and *Mansfield Park*.

AUDREY COCKSHUTT

London

In May Judith Marshall gave a talk entitled 'Jane Austen: some discoveries', which concerned meetings that had parallels in the novels. It was held at Deborah Land's house in Holland Park and was followed by a strawberry tea. Our fifth annual dinner was held at the New Cavendish Club in December. There were readings from a letter to Fanny, and others featuring Admiral Croft and Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Brian Southam proposed the toast and spoke on Jane Austen and the navy. There have been two London newsletters, in April and October. Subscriptions from our 49 members have kept us afloat.

Many of our members attended the 1 November conference on 'Jane Austen and the 1990s', at which the speakers included Professor Judy Simons, who showed scenes from the films *Emma* and *Clueless*, and Dr Hans Breunig, of the University of Magdeburg.

ALLAN WILKINSON

Midlands

Our theme for the year was '*Sanditon* and the Seaside Holiday'. Speakers at the AGM explored this thoroughly, giving fascinating new information and insights. Professor Roger Sales examined *Sanditon* in the context of invalidism and the Regency watering-place, Bridget Pugh spoke about 'Enjoying ill health', and Sarah Levitt rounded off the day with an entertaining look at costume of the period. Sunday

22 June was very wet but this did not deter members from driving to Kenilworth to meet the JASNA party, to explore the castle and grounds of Stoneleigh Abbey and enjoy tea in the company of our new friends.

Returning to our theme, our autumn meeting took the form of a seaside tour to Sidmouth. Saturday was spent visiting places associated with the Austens. At Colyton, Mr John Cochrane told us about the church and Revd Richard Buller. Over lunch at Lyme Regis Diana Shervington spoke to us of the Austen memorabilia in her possession and showed us examples of Jane Austen's handiwork in the caps, cape and gloves which had belonged to her. Back at Sidmouth, historian Dr John Travis gave us a guided walk around Sidmouth and after dinner an illustrated talk on the development of Sidmouth as a watering place. On Sunday we drove to Saltram, known to Henry and Charles Austen as the home of their friends the Count and Countess of Morley. On Sunday 14 December we celebrated Jane Austen's birthday. After an excellent meal we were delightfully entertained by the singer and harpist Margaret Knight. DAWN THOMAS

Norwich

This newly established Branch held an informal meeting every two months in 1997, sometimes at the Maddermarket Theatre and latterly at my home. We set ourselves such tasks as talking about favourite Jane Austen heroines, a discussion about her clergymen, food and drink in the novels, and excerpts from the novels which have inspired the reader to delve further. The focus of the meetings has been an exchange of opinion and appreciation of Jane Austen. HILDA WELLS

Oxford

The study day on 1 November was held as usual at St Hilda's College and started with a lively and stimulating talk by Rachel Billington explaining how she came to write *Perfect Happiness,* her sequel to *Emma.* Subsequent group discussion revealed the extent to which all participants shared an enthusiasm for extending their enjoyment and understanding of Emma beyond the confines of the original novel. Lunch was followed by a talk by Tony Corley of Reading University on Jane Austen's days at the Abbey School in Reading; Mr Corley's detailed knowledge of the history of the school and the association of the Austens with it led to some fascinating insights into Jane's early years. In June members of the Oxford Branch met in Bath for a pleasant afternoon walk led by Helen Ghosh and Maggie Lane. This culminated in a hospitable welcome at the Austens' house in Sydney Place, where the part of the house open to the public was viewed, followed by tea.

ANNE-MARIE DRUMMOND

Southern Circle

Our informal group met three times in 1997. In March Tom Carpenter kindly allowed us to meet at Chawton, where we renewed our acquaintance with *Emma.* Some present thought her 'precocious'. Others considered Mr Knightley 'patient',

'a dull character and a know-all prig', and even 'dubious' for waiting so long for a girl so much his junior. The tone of the discussion was lively. At the Society's AGM in July the group again enjoyed assisting Susan McCartan as stewards, yet finding time to hold our customary picnic under the trees. November saw the group at Manor House School, Little Bookham, near to the place Jane Austen stayed with the family of her godfather, the Revd Samuel Cooke. Our hostess Linda Mendes introduced a local historian, Mr Stephen Fortescue, who enlightened us with his talk on Bookham in Jane Austen's time. This was the first time the group had invited an outside speaker. We concluded our meeting with a visit to the nearby church, where we saw a memorial plaque to Miss (?Lydia) Marianne Dashwood.

BILL RAMSAY

The Jane Austen Society of North America (JASNA)

AGM: Officially, that acronym stands for Annual General Meeting', but one JASNA wag likes to call the AGM our 'Annual GRAND Meeting'. In the case of our 19th annual conference at San Francisco October 3-5, his description is accurate. Never have we been able to admire so many fine – and authentic – costumes, not only those worn (and frequently created) by our members, but some stunning examples on mannequins at a splendid exhibition, and still more during Saturday evening's Regency Ball.

Intellectual fare at this AGM was also impressive, but not at the cost of amusement. Five plenary speakers illuminated markedly different aspects of the conference theme, '*Sanditon*: The New Direction?' The keynoter, British mystery writer Reginald Hill, acquitted himself with such a winning blend of erudition and wit that some present suggested naming him keynoter-for-life. Forget his warning that 'Persons attempting to find a message in this talk will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a master degree will be sadly disappointed.' Instead, try Jane Austen's uproarious 'History of England' on a youngster and see if he or she, like Hill, will not enlist in the ranks of ardent Janeites thereafter.

Any who doubted the potential of *Sanditon* – the fragment on which our favorite author was working when she died – as a conference theme had their worries allayed: non-stop breakout sessions Saturday had conferees complaining only of no time for lunch or no willingness to make time by missing a single presentation. Conference organizers supplied cookies and brownies during breaks for those loath to leave when Jane-ian nourishment was available. Performances of 'My Solitary Elegance' by the British actress Judith French were sell-outs and very well received. Posters sessions – new for JASNA – proved popular for making brief but colorful points: A poster on JASNA's 1998 JASNA tour of England, for example, informed prospective travelers of the itinerary and theme, 'Jane Austen, Great Homes & Gardens', and of a new highlight, attendance at the British Jane Austen Society's AGM at Chawton in July. A poster showing a map (now owned by Goucher College) of land holdings on the British island colony of Antigua in

Jane Austen's era revealed the possible source of many surnames of characters in the novels.

JASNA currently provides professional database support services for registration and maintenance of the AGM ledger, as well as ongoing consultation on a wide variety of matters ranging from immigration status of foreign performers and tax matters to 'vetting' of potential speakers and premises. JASNA has also recently arranged for the endowment of the AGM keynote address (hereafter to be known as the Carol Ann Medine Keynote Address, after the donor, a JASNA member from Los Angeles) and a new AGM lectureship reserved for a North American scholar. ELSA SOLENDER in *Jasna News,* Winter 1997

The 1998 Conference takes place in Quebec City, 9-11 October. The theme is Northanger Abbey: the Gothic and More. *Speakers include Jan Fergus, Stephen Clarke, Irene Collins, Isobel Grundy and Juliet McMaster. The keynote speaker is Maggie Lane. There is a call for papers for the 1999 Conference, when the topic will be* Emma. *Abstracts or proposals should be submitted to Professor Joan Klingel Ray, address obtainable from the Editor.*

The Jane Austen Society of Australia (JASA)

1997 has been a successful and interesting year. Membership has reached 450: meetings every two months are attended by about 150 people.

Our programme this year has been varied and stimulating, the highlight being a one-day conference on *Mansfield Park,* held at the Sydney Maritime Museum. At a joint meeting with the Australian Byron Society we discussed the connections between Jane Austen and Byron and learned about their shared publisher, John Murray. Other talks were on 'Jane Austen's Aunts', 'Fanny Trollope', 'Jane Austen: with the Gloves Off', 'The Art of Conversation in *Pride and Prejudice'* and 'Quill Pen and Computer'. The year ended with a lunch to celebrate Jane Austen's birthday and Christmas, with guest speaker Sandy Lerner, owner of Chawton House.

The Jane Austen Society of Australia would love to welcome members of the English Society to meetings. Please contact Susannah Fullerton, 26 Macdonald Street, Paddington, Sydney, NSW 2021 (ph. 02 9380 5894) if you are planning a visit to this part of the world and would like to attend one of our meetings.

SUSANNAH FULLERTON

The Jane Austen Society of Melbourne

Our Society began with a most exciting event – the launching of our first journal entitled *Observations.* The journal has been well received and it is our intention to make this an annual event. The journal was launched by our first speaker for the year, Dr Peter Fitzpatrick from Monash University, who explored the connection between Jane Austen and Charles Dickens. Other speakers were Dr Christina Macrae, whose topic was 'Jane Austen – The Subtle Feminist?', Bronwen Hickman, who spoke on 'The Women Who had Gone Before', and at our Annual General Meeting, Susannah Fullerton, President of The Jane Austen Society of Australia in Sydney, who presented 'Jane Austen and the Art of Naming'. At this meeting we

also had the pleasure of welcoming Helen Lefroy, who gave a short address.

Our Newsletter continues to give great pleasure to readers and we must thank the Editor, Margaret Morris, for her expertise in putting together such an interesting publication. A Programming Committee is at present working on a programme for 1998 – the theme being 'Interiors'. Our library is beginning to grow and be enjoyed by members – which is all due to the work of Robin Lawley.

President: Mrs Carla Hawley, 9 Sharrock Drive, Dingley, Victoria 3172.

Secretary: Miss Marjorie Marris, 58 Holyrood Street, Hampton, Victoria 3188.

CARLA HAWLEY

Chawton Great House

Some time, I suppose in the 1940s, Dorothy Darnell took me to Chawton Great House at the invitation of Mrs Captain Knight. What I remember chiefly are: the little panelled Oak Room at the head of the stairs, in which Jane Austen used to read aloud from her current script to such of the Knight children as were thought likely to be amused by it or such as would not take no for an answer, while the younger ones gathered outside the door, roused to curiosity and envy by the laughter coming from inside. I remember also in the library two full-length portraits of Edward and Elizabeth Knight. I don't suppose they were by Romney; I think they would be called School of Romney. They were admirably placed and seemed to bring the owners back into their house.

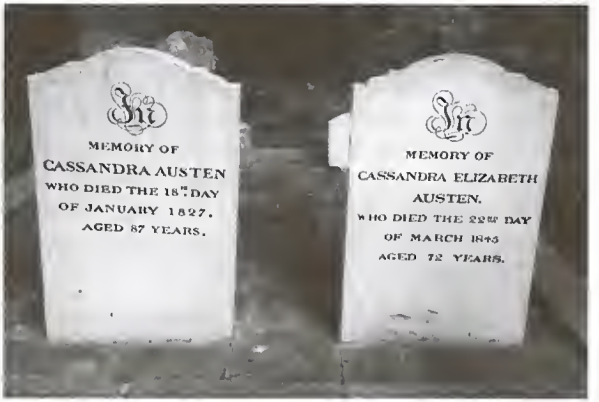
The most interesting thing I remember was in some room upstairs where there was a little collection of personalia said to be connected with Jane Austen. One of these was a cap; it had a soft top but a stiffened frontlet (which I think would have been called a *ferronière*). This frontlet was formed in three curves, the middle one being higher than the other two. The cap was made of some lilac material; the frontlet was edged with green and decorated with three clusters of glass beads, crystal and emerald green.

ELIZABETH JENKINS

When Miss Jenkins sent me this recollection, I wondered if the portrait of Edward Knight might have been the full-length portrait which formerly hung in the offices of the Alton Urban District Council (see *Annual Report* for 1966, page 5) and is now at Chawton Cottage. This was painted while Edward was in Rome on his Grand Tour, undertaken between 1786 and 1788. There is one detail which does not quite square with Miss Jenkins' account that the picture seems to bring Edward and Elizabeth 'back into their own house', since in the portrait now at Chawton, Edward is posed against a background of classical ruins, telling us that this is the cultivated young Englishman on his European travels.

Mr Tom Carpenter tells me that neither he nor Miss Jean Bowden knows of the 'cap'. Possibly, some member will know of its whereabouts.

BRIAN SOUTHAM



Newly restored headstones in the churchyard at Chawton
(Photo: P. Brittain)

Jane Austen's early adventures in publishing

Jane Austen's name first appears in print in 1796 when she is listed as a subscriber to Fanny Burney's new novel *Camilla*, published by T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies. Within one year of this appearance in print, Jane's father wrote to Cadell and Davies advising them that his daughter had written a novel comprising three volumes, about the length of Miss Burney's *Evelina*. He inquired if they would be prepared to publish this work. Even with the inducement of publishing it at the author's risk, Cadell and Davies turned it down, and the early draft of *Pride and Prejudice* (then titled *First Impressions*) was reluctantly placed on one side.[1] Since Adam Smith, Ann Radcliffe, Hannah More, Thomas Gisborne, Charlotte Smith and even James Stanier Clarke were among the writers then contracted to Cadell and Davies, they could afford to be rather off-hand to an obscure country parson's offer of a manuscript novel, by an anonymous author.

Thomas Cadell Junior had taken over the prestigious publishing house on the death of his father, also Thomas Cadell, in 1793. William Davies had been chosen as a partner for his son, by the elder Thomas Cadell. Cadell's premises in the Strand were said to be the grandest in England and perhaps in Europe. Booksellers such as Cadell's had showrooms where gentlemen could lounge and read newspapers or catalogues, vying with coffee houses to provide genteel social amenities. The young Cadell married a Miss Smith (sister of the 'two Mr Smiths of the City' of *Rejected Addresses* fame), and the business flourished until Thomas Cadell Jun.'s death in 1836. Cadell's were destined never to publish any of Jane Austen's work.[2]

Susan (an early version of *Northanger Abbey),* composed between 1798 and 1799, was copied out by Jane and taken in the spring of 1803, by a business associate of Jane's brother Henry, to B. Crosby and Co, a well known publishing-house purveying Gothic romances. Benjamin Crosby was the son of a Yorkshire grazier. As a young man he was apprenticed to James Nunn, an established bookseller of Great Queen Street, London. He quickly mastered the trade and moved to succeed

Charles Stalker of 4 Stationers' Court, where he raised himself to eminence in the trade. Canny with money, he always bought at trade sales any stocks of publishers' books that were being sold off or dispersed. He would then travel through the country selling these remaindered volumes. He achieved much success and was highly esteemed.[3] It was to Stationers' Court that William Seymour, Henry Austen's friend, took the manuscript of *Susan* and received a £10 contract payment, with a stipulation for early publication.

During 1803 *The Three Monks, Moss Cliff Abbey* and *The Two Princes of Persia* were rolling off the presses at B. Crosby & Co., but not *Susan*. Possibly Crosby felt that Jane Austen's new satirical Gothic novel was just not appropriate for that publishing year. He advertised *Susan* in an advertisement leaf at the end of Vol 1 of Prevost and Blagdon's *Flowers of Literature (1801 & 1802)* under a lurid list of titles, including *Depraved Husband and Philosophic Wife,* as being prepared for publication; but that was not the case.[4]

After her traumatic years of moving house in Bath and Southampton, Jane Austen tried to buy back the manuscript from Crosby & Co in 1809. She felt settled in the countryside at Chawton, as a tenant of her brother Edward, and was minded to revise *Susan* and offer it perhaps to another publisher. Benjamin Crosby's son Richard replied in lofty tones to Jane's letter that any attempt on her part to find another publisher would be resisted, and, moreover, that they would be prepared to go to litigation.[5] There the matter rested for another seven years until early 1816 when Jane requested her brother Henry to negotiate again with B. and R. Crosby (as the company was now designated) to reclaim the manuscript.[6]

Things had changed for the Crosby family business. Benjamin Crosby had suffered a stroke in 1814; this decided him to dispose of the business. It was broken up and sold off just as Benjamin suffered the second stroke that killed him. Richard Crosby appears to have retained a small part of the business, but by 1815 he was experiencing some financial difficulties.[7] He was declared bankrupt in January 1816 and was very pleased to receive the £10 Henry was offering for the return of the 'Susan' manuscript. It has always been said that when Henry Austen told Richard Crosby who the author was, he was devastated and cursed his luck for selling it back to the family. The truth is rather more prosaic: Richard Crosby was desperate for cash to repay his angry creditors; there would be no more published work from the firm of Crosby.[8] Richard Crosby tried to set up a smaller bookselling venture at Eden Place, Kentish Town, but that venture also failed.[9]

Jane Austen's third attempt to have her work published took place when her indefatigable brother Henry approached Thomas Egerton of the Military Library in Whitehall, during the winter of 1810-1811, with the manuscript of *Sense and Sensibility*. Henry doubtless reminded the publisher of his involvement in publishing Henry and James Austen's university articles in the satirical periodical *The Loiterer,* published by Egerton's (among others) when the boys were up at Oxford.[10] Also Henry Austen and Thomas Egerton had a mutual business acquaintance in Charles Roworth, who printed for Austen, Maunde and Tilson (Henry's bank) most of the reward notices for the apprehension of debtors who had absconded.[11] Roworth also

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——— Pascuntur et arbusta passim,
Et glaucas Salices, Casiamq; Crocumq; rubentem,
Et pinguem Tiliam, et ferrugineos Hyacynthos.
Virg. Georg. lib. iv. 181.

LONDON:

Printed by J. Swan, Angel Street;

FOR B. CROSBY AND CO. STATIONERS' COURT.

1803.

printed the novels and plays, published by Egerton; indeed, he was a great friend of Egerton's.

When Henry Austen negotiated with Thomas Egerton the publisher was 61 years old, a confirmed bachelor, living and working at 30 Charing Cross, Whitehall. The old Admiralty buildings were opposite Egerton's showroom, which stood

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on the corner of Great Scotland Yard. There was much bustle from Parliament at one end of Whitehall and the Royal Mews at the other (where Trafalgar Square is now). Many book and printing trade businesses were concentrated in the Strand and Fleet Street areas. Egerton had links with the military; he charitably published *The Orphans* by Henry Shepherd in 1800, 'For the benefit of widows and orphans of the soldiers who fell in Holland'. His will shows he left bequests to widows and retired officers of the Army Pay Office and War Office of Whitehall.[12] This proximity to the War Office is probably the source of the Military Library label. It is worth remembering that Henry Austen set up his bank and army agency with fellow militia officers; the war with France dominated everything.

Egerton accepted Jane Austen's work for publication at her own liability. Even Henry's famous charm could not make Egerton buy the copyright. Jane checked the proofs in March/April 1811, and Henry is mentioned in Jane's letter to Cassandra of April 25th as having given a rocket to Charles Roworth to get a move on! Jane also refers to a grand party Henry is planning to give; Egerton is to be among the guests.[13] *Sense and Sensibility* was published in late October 1811 and recouped its

costs (with £140 profit) within two years. A second edition published by Egerton was issued in 1813, again printed by Charles Roworth at Temple Bar. Jane Austen was again saddled with having to pay for the reprinting. Payments came to Jane from Egerton in 1815 through to 1817, showing a profit to her of £32 8s.[14] There were some errors in the text; this has led scholars to think Jane did not have a chance to see proofs of the second edition.

The next novel to be submitted to Thomas Egerton for his approval was *First Impressions*, which Cadell and Davies had rejected; it had been extensively altered and retitled *Pride and Prejudice*. When in 1812 this manuscript was submitted to Egerton, who had been in the publishing trade for 28 years since he and his brother John took over John Millan's business in 1784,[15] he immediately recognised this novel to be extraordinary. He offered Jane Austen £110 for the copyright, which she accepted. She thought it was not worth haggling for more, having to pay printing costs, etc, all over again if the deal fell through. January 1813 saw the publication of *Pride and Prejudice* with Roworth printing Vol. 1 and G. Sidney of Northumberland Street, Strand, printing Vols. 2 and 3. Egerton was relieved to find the reception favourable to his investment: his thirteen-volume *Biographical Dictionary* (published with T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1812, at enormous capital cost) was not selling at all!

The response to the novel was gratifying. Jane Austen's reputation as a novelist went up, but her fortune did not. Egerton was the sole recipient of the profits from the novel. October 1813 saw the second edition published, without Jane Austen being able to revise some of the errors she had spotted. The third edition was published four years later, in 1817, the year of her death.

While the first edition of *Pride and Prejudice* was being read by the general public, Jane Austen was putting the last touches to *Mansfield Park*, her next composition. Again Henry was to negotiate with Thomas Egerton to purchase the copyright. Craftily he praised it, but refused to buy it outright. Proofs were checked by Jane at Henry's house in March 1814; publication took place in May 1814. Charles Roworth printed Vol. 2 , G. Sidney printed Vols 1 and 3. Jane thought the edition of 1250 (approx) too small and the five small advertisements for the novel in the London newspapers paltry. There were no reviews when the book reached the public. Although Jane eventually made a reasonable profit on the venture, she was unhappy with Thomas Egerton.

In November 1814, when Thomas Egerton was still not prepared to venture on a second edition of *Mansfield Park* or to correct the errors, Jane and Henry both felt perhaps they had better move to another publisher; after all, they were paying the initial outlay for any new novels to be published. The two greatest poets of the age, Byron and Scott, were both in Piccadilly, nearby, with publisher John Murray. Henry and Jane felt Murray would bring prestige to the novelist, and negotiations commenced.[16]

Meanwhile Egerton carried on with his publishing business until 1830, when he died at the age of eighty. His business was then continued by his assistant, Francis Pinkney, until 1844. Egerton's will covered his brother John's family (John was

in partnership with Thomas, until his early death in 1795), his other two brothers James and Joseph, sundry Pay-Office/War Office pensioners and significantly Charles Roworth, his printer-friend, who received £50.[17] Thomas Egerton also left money to his loyal workforce, quite a liberal act for that time. He gave Jane Austen's work to the world, through his business, and for that we must recognise his importance.

Charles Roworth, the printer, went on to haunt Jane Austen again when she moved publishers. He printed for John Murray as well as Thomas Egerton; Jane was soon complaining of his delaying tactics in blaming Bugden's the stationers. Jane Austen must have enjoyed the irony of finding the same problems with a different publisher. However, with *Emma* it is generally conceded that she moved into distinguished company, gratefully leaving her early publishers behind.

CHRIS VIVEASH

Notes

1 D. Le Faye, Jane *Austen. A Family Record* (London: British Library, 1989).
2 S. Lee, ed., *Dictionary of National Biography (* London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1895) Vol 3, p. 631.
3 M. Summers, *The Gothic Quest* (London: Fortune Press, 1968) pp. 79-80.
4 The Revd F. Prevost and F. Blagdon, *Flowers of Literature; for 1801 & 1802.* London: B. Crosby & Co. 1803) pp. 463-464. See also A. Axelrad, *Persuasions* (JASNA, Issue 15, 1993) p. 44-45.
5 Le Faye, p. 153.
6 Ian Maxted, *The London Book Trades 1775-1800* (Folkestone: Dawson, 1977) p. 56. B. Crosby & Co. from 1802 to 1812. B. and R. Crosby from 1813 to 1815.
7 Summers, p. 79-80.
8 *The Times,* 22- January 1816.
9 *The Times,* 22 -. October 1817.
10 D. Gilson, *A Bibliography of Jane Austen (*Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) p.8.
11 Questors Rare Books Ltd, Catalogue 3, 1988, Item 120.
12 Public Record Office: PROB 11/1775. Grateful thanks to Robin Vick for his help.
13 D. Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford: OUP, 1995), Letter 71. It is unclear in Letter 70 which Egerton is involved, but as Jane and Henry were correcting proofs from Thomas Egerton's during 1811, I am sure it is he.
14 J. A. Hodge, *The Double Life of Jane Austen* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1972) pp. 207-208.
15 Maxted, p. 73.
16 C. Viveash, *Persuasions* (JASNA, Issue 17, 1995) p. 31.
17 Egerton's will. Public Record Office. PROB 11/1775.

Reading and appreciating Aunt Jane

The current public interest in Jane Austen may owe something to the audio factor. The one-woman shows, audio-cassettes and, to some extent, the television versions and films of her novels are designed primarily to be heard; this was a pleasure which later generations of Jane's family had also shared.

When Jane's novels were first written, they were probably enjoyed most when read aloud; this practice was a common evening habit with which the Austens were thoroughly familiar. Jane told Cassandra in December 1798 that their father 'reads Cowper to us in the evenings',[1] one of Fanny Price's tasks as companion to Lady Bertram was reading to her and in Chapter 4 of *Emma* Harriet Smith mentions that Robert Martin 'sometimes of an evening would read something aloud out of the "Elegant Extracts", very entertaining'.

In *A Family Record* Deirdre Le Faye gives evidence of relatives (from Jane's brother Henry to her Knight nieces) revelling in the experience of hearing Jane herself read her novels to members of the family.[2] Edward, Lord Brabourne, the eldest son of Jane's favourite niece Fanny Knight endorses this: 'I have often heard my mother speak of Aunt Jane's reading some of her own works aloud to her – how delightful it must have been to have those life-like characters described by the lips of the very person who has called them into existence!'[3]

With such a common custom it is not surprising to find that as the years passed members of the Knight family continued to read Jane's works aloud. Fanny Knight's sister Lizzy had been one of those privileged to hear the novels read by their author before they were published and endeavoured to hand the pleasure of this experience on; her granddaughter Marcia Rice recalled a family tradition that Lizzy 'read Aunt Jane as no one else could. This was because she was her niece and could enter into the whole atmosphere of the wit and setting of the books'.[4]

Despite Fanny's unpleasant letter of 1869 about Jane there is reason to believe that she also passed on the pleasure of reading Jane's novels to her children. Her son Edward clearly knew how enjoyable such an experience could be. He was still indulging in the novels as relaxation in middle age for he read *Mansfield Park* on the evening of Boxing Day 1879;[5] whether this was aloud is not stated but it probably was since it was customary for one of the Knatchbull parents to read a book aloud to the seasonal family gathering (Mark Twain and Dickens on occasions). Christmas being a time when there is a particularly strong sense of family, the works of Aunt Jane were a natural choice. Five years later he had just edited and published Jane's letters and, undeterred by a poor review in *The Times*, gave a copy to his son Cecil as a Christmas gift and on Christmas Eve 'read some of Aunt Jane Austen's letters to her [his wife] and her mother'.[6] He further ensured that the next generation knew of the family's unique literary heritage by giving his twenty-three year old daughter Kate copies of all Jane's novels in 1882[7] and a set to his daughter-in-law Amy at Christmas 1887; Amy, who was pregnant, had the pleasure of Lord Brabourne's youngest daughter Eva reading *Emma* aloud to her while she rested during the festivities.[8]

In the generation of Jane's great-great-nieces, Eva, a natural lover of literature, enjoyed Jane's novels to the full and appreciated all associations with her great-great-aunt.[9] When she was seventeen she wrote a biography of Jane for a magazine competition (which unfortunately has not survived); she later became one of the early students at Newnham College, Cambridge. She records that her German governess read *Emma* to her and comments 'what a scare about Harriet'[10] – presumably referring to the episode in Chapter XI when the heroine is faced with the threat of Harriet's affection for Mr Knightley. Eva admitted to her sister that she would not mind marrying Mr Knightley herself – a rather different view from that of her father who 'never could endure Mr Knightley'.[11]

When Eva finished reading Fanny Burney's *Evelina* she immediately declared it to be 'very amusing but it is not to be compared with Aunt Jane's books'.[12] Interestingly, it was the reading aloud of *Evelina* by Jane that led her niece Caroline Austen-Leigh to comment, 'She was considered to read aloud remarkably well. I did not often hear her but once I knew her take up a volume of *Evelina* and read a few pages of Mr Smith and the Brangtons and I thought it was like a play'.[13]

Apart from reading the novels, other associations brought Aunt Jane to Eva's mind. On visiting her grandmother's house in 1878 she was shown 'some quaint twelfth night characters dated 1811 and 1815 which must have belonged to Grandmama when she was a child – perhaps aunt Jane was at one of the Christmas parties at which these very pictures were used.'[14] The characters, usually of fairy tale or fictional figures and including a King and Queen, were depicted on paper and drawn out of a basket on Twelfth Night (Jan 6). Whoever drew royalty had privileges for the evening and everyone was expected to dress or act in character; Henry Austen was once a Jew (1806) and Anna (later Lefroy) a shepherdess (1810).[15] It is a nice scene to imagine Jane joining in the fun but unfortunately there is no record of her staying at Godmersham for Christmas although Henry and Cassandra did. It is likely that Jane did at least know about the Knight family's annual gaiety; she is remembered by a Hampshire contemporary, William Heathcote, for attending a Twelfth Day party, probably in 1808, where she enthusiastically assumed the part of Mrs Candour (from *The School for Scandal).*[16] The Twelfth Night custom was still popular in her brother James's family in the 1840s.[17]

A different social event prompted Eva to think of Aunt Jane. While she was getting ready for a concert at Deal Assembly Rooms she was reminded of Jane's description of similar functions in Bath,[18] and when visiting Bath itself on a glorious autumn day in 1880 she 'thought of Aunt Jane and her heroines whose partiality for Bath is quite excusable although I am afraid they cared more for the attractions of the pump room than for the scenery.[19] The memory of Aunt Jane was particularly precious to Eva – it was she who was entrusted by her father with a brooch containing some of Jane's hair.[20]

Towards the end of her life Jane wrote gratefully of being 'blessed in the tenderness of such a Family',[21] succeeding generations of that family felt a reciprocal gratitude towards her. Nieces, great-nephews and great-great-nieces in the Knight branch of the family grew to know and love her writings; by the closing

years of the century Jane was still remembered with warm affection, not least when her fiction came to life in the spoken word.

MARGARET WILSON

Notes

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2 D. Le Faye and W. and R. A. Austen-Leigh, *Jane Austen: A Family Record* (London,1989), p. 181.
3 Edward, 1st Lord Brabourne (ed), *Letters of Jane Austen* (London,1884), vol. II, p. 121.
4 Joan Corder, *'Jane Austen's Kindred'*. Typescript lodged at the Royal College of Arms, 1953.
5 The Knatchbull family archives are deposited in the Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone. I am indebted to the present Lord Brabourne for his kind permission to quote from them. The catalogue mark is U951. The 1st Lord Brabourne's diary for 1879 is F25/32.
6 U951 F25/37, 1884.
7 U951 F25/35, 1882.
8 U951 F30/8, Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen 1887.
9 U951 F30/3, 10 June 1878.
10 U951 F30/3, 12 Feb 1878.
11 Brabourne, *Letters,* vol. 1, p. 89.
12 U951 F30/3, 19 June 1878.
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17 Mary-Augusta Austen-Leigh, *James Edward Austen-Leigh :a memoir* (1911), p. 149.
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Battleridge

Cassandra Cooke, cousin of Jane Austen's mother, was an author. There is one reference in a letter from Jane Austen to her sister in October 1798, when Jane Austen was aged 22, to a work by Mrs Cooke about to be published.[1] This was *Battleridge, an historical Tale Founded on Facts in two volumes by a Lady of Quality.* It was published in London in 1799 by Cawthorn(e) & Hutt, 24 Cockspur Street, and distributed, among others, by J. Hatchard of Piccadilly. There is a rare copy in the British Library. A first reading is disappointing, as the characters do not come to life. Mrs Cooke had a spirited way of telling a tale – or rather two tales, as the book consists of two separate stories, and she was obviously interested in setting the historical scene in each case, but the characters are not memorable. In her preface Mrs Cooke writes: 'The author of *Battleridge* ventures not much upon Love and dares not attempt florid scenery: and if events seem rather uncommon, an appearance of simple plain truth is all herein endeavoured to be represented.'

The first story is set in the Civil War and is the one of interest here. In her preface Mrs Cooke writes, 'The manners of the age are endeavoured to be delineated, particularly those of the Puritans', but in fact the story owes much, as Mrs Cooke recognises, to Mrs Radcliffe and the gothic novel. The story of *Battleridge* contains 'an extraordinary occurrence at Battleridge Castle' with the appearance of a ghost or spectre, the original of a portrait hanging in the gallery. The plot turns on important deeds and other documents discovered by following the spectre's instructions. The lost deeds are in an oak coffer with a false bottom, and there is a dramatic scene when the chest is opened: 'The hammer and chissel soon sounded: but from the excessive hardness of the wood it proved almost an Herculean labour. "Try the gimblet – gently, gently Sir Ralph, lest it should pierce the papers.".' There is also a mysterious lady held prisoner in the castle: the maid, Deborah, 'shammed sick, and shutting herself up in a press in the before-mentioned gallery, saw through a crevice Prudence bring up some victuals, unlock the further gallery door which opens into a little dark passage leading to the chained chamber, where my old lord's grandfather always slept and kept his treasures, and knock at the further door. Deborah heard the inside bolts draw but could not see so far what they were at, but she heard a pretty voice say "Thank you".'

This is not only typical of the gothic novels that Jane Austen amusingly satirised in *Northanger Abbey* but the story is very similar to part of it, where Catherine Morland suspects that Mrs Tilney may be alive and held prisoner in the abbey and, incidentally, the oak coffer with a false bottom and important papers within is a forcible reminder of Catherine Morland's discovery in a 'black and yellow Japan cabinet of the handsomist kind' of the roll of household bills and washing lists. A comparison of the two stories shows that 'simple plain truth' is much more represented by Jane Austen's work, and certainly Catherine Morland, among others, comes alive as a real person, unlike Mrs Cooke's characters.

A memorandum by Jane Austen's sister, Cassandra Austen, states that *Northanger Abbey* was originally written in 1797 and 1798. *Battleridge* appeared

the next year in 1799. The contact between the Austen and Cooke families was close and regular. Jane Austen's mother and her first cousin were close in age and shared a name – they were both born Cassandra Leigh. Mrs Cooke was the daughter of Dr Theophilus Leigh, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and Mrs Austen was the daughter of Thomas Leigh, younger brother of Theophilus. Mrs Cooke appears, before her marriage, in some letters written by the Revd John Penrose from Bath to his home in Cornwall in April 1766.[2] She was then aged 22 and there is a mention in the Penrose letters that 'Miss Leigh and Mr Cook (*sic*) drank tea with us this Evening', which may refer to Cassandra's future husband, presumably courting at the time. The Revd Samuel Cooke married Cassandra Leigh in 1768 and was to become Jane Austen's godfather. He was Vicar of Great Bookham in Surrey from 1769 to 1820. The Penrose letters were written two years after Jane Austen's parents had been married in Bath at Walcot Church.

It is known that Jane Austen visited the Cookes at Great Bookham on more than one occasion, and evidence from Jane Austen's letters implies an easy intimacy in the younger generation dating from their youth. Jane Austen used a Surrey setting for both *The Watsons* and *Emma*. The reference to *Battleridge* in Jane Austen's letter to her sister suggests that she was familiar with Mrs Cooke's story before publication. It remains speculation as to how it may have influenced her, and also what Mrs Cooke thought of *Northanger Abbey*, and at what stage she knew of its existence or read one of the versions.

In *Northanger Abbey*, Henry Tilney describes a gothic scene, including 'Dorothy, the ancient housekeeper', a parallel to the maids, Deborah and Prudence in Mrs Cooke's tale, and Catherine Morland comments, 'Oh Mr Tilney, how frightful! This is just like a book! But it cannot really happen to me. I am sure your housekeeper is not really Dorothy!' 'This is just like a book!' could well be a direct reference to Mrs Cooke's *Battleridge*.

JUDITH MARSHALL

Notes

1 Letter 10, *Jane Austen's Letters*. Collected and edited by Deirdre Le Faye. 3rd Edition. Oxford University Press, 1995.

2 *Letters from Bath 1766-1767* by the Revd John Penrose. Introduction and notes by Brigitte Mitchell and Hubert Penrose. Alan Sutton, Gloucester, 1983. Also 'Cousins of Jane Austen: Some New References' by Judith Tomlin (now Marshall), *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* vol. 8 no.2, Autumn 1985.

Frivolities and Affections

In David Selwyn's attractive collection of Austen family verse, a third generation is briefly represented. The principal contributors are Jane herself and her mother. James Edward, her nephew, opens his *Memoir* with the remark that more than half of his sister's brief life was spent at Steventon. Letters surviving from that period of her life are relatively few. It is our good fortune, however, that Jane's admirable, if slightly sententious nephew, should have turned his attention to family history and that examples of her own and her mother's verses from that period should have been preserved. These help to throw light on the writers and still more on the quality of family life in the Austen household. The Austens were well read, observant, witty and ingenious. They wrote to amuse and entertain each other and they excelled in word games, riddles, charades, acrostics and verse letters. As poets and versifiers they were skilled in different degrees, but in a playful teasing manner, generally combined with rhyming skill. Critics have suggested that Jane, after settling at Chawton, had produced her finest work, and in it seemed to have recovered the spontaneity and sparkle of the family circle in her youth. The warmth and fun was generated in a close knit group of relations and friends. Collectively they provided their own entertainment. Some riddles and charades may have been put together by a family group rather than a single writer; one such, on the subject 'Wordsworth', was probably composed at Portsdown Lodge or at Scarlets, where the Austen-Leighs were living after 1837. Cassandra was a constant visitor at both houses; her loyalty helped to bring an echo of Jane's crystalline wit into the family amusements of a new generation.

The Wordsworth charade runs to three verses, of which the first is even more eloquent than Mr Elton's celebrated charade in *Emma*.

> The first's the horrid snare wherewith
> A false one wins his bride,
> And woman's weapon ever sith
> Old Eve began to chide;
> And that by which Demosthenes
> Swayed Athens in her pride,
> And which he shouted to the seas
> Above their brawling tide

The practice of verse composition was continued in the third generation of the Steventon family. James Edward and the two nieces, Anna Austen and Fanny Knight, are briefly represented in David Selwyn's anthology. The copious verses of another nephew, Henry Edgar, second son of Francis Austen, are now at Chawton. Caroline, James Edward's sister, wrote verses from an early age, but her diary for 1871 records their destruction.

Though relatively hard up, the talented family at Steventon had good connections. James Edward lived and raised a large family in some style. Literary tastes and pursuits were transmitted over subsequent generations. James grew up with a keen appreciation of country life. He is represented in the anthology



Catherine Hubback, Portsdown Lodge, c. 1850.

by two boyish verses, one of which is addressed to his father, the other a teasing appreciation of his aunt's anonymously published novels. A much later survival of his humour and high spirits describes in a verse letter accompanying the gift of a knife what he saw on a visit to Bath in 1836:

> The aeronaut, the one who's thought to love his wife as well as his life, yet is never loathe to risk them both, goes up to the moon in an air balloon. The buoyant thing, by many a string will be held down hard in the Sidney Garden, 'till he's ready to rise and leave our eyes. This Sidney Garden you may get a card in, if you are willing to pay two shilling'; but as Bath's by natur' one vast theatre, rising clear, tier above tier, where nought can be hidden from eyes forbidden, we'll not give a farden to enter the Garden but choose some space upon Camden Place: or Belvedere or somewhere near, or Claverton Down beyond the town, and gaze our fill from the side of the hill, without paying any collector a penny.

Writing from Chawton years earlier Jane remarks on his uncle Henry's very superior sermons, 'you and I must try to get hold of one or two and put them into our novels.'[2] She goes on to tease him about his strong manly vigorous sketches, winding up the subject with her famous remark on her own two inches of ivory on which so little effect is produced after so much effort. In the end James Edward wrote sermons rather than novels, also a history of the Vyne Hunt and eventually the invaluable *Memoir*. In old age his sister Caroline grew ashamed of 'childish frivolity'. She burnt all her writings in verse, finding them flippant and in bad taste – 'an attempt at the comic where comedy should not have been', and she wonders that they had passed without rebuke.[3] Today we are more likely to wonder at the tolerance and youthful spirit of the Austens in earlier years rather than their humour. Even Caroline must have joined in the happy laughter evoked by the riddles, the ingenious word-play and the ripe compliments, laced with mockery, to be found in Jane's verses rehearsing the charms of her niece 'the lovely Anna'. But the largest output of verse and prose from the nieces and nephews was in fact produced by two of Frank Austen's children, Henry and Catherine, who imbibed the culture and customs of the Austens in the pleasing environment of Portsdown Lodge, the Admiral's house on the outskirts of Portsmouth where opportunities for cricket, archery and wild driving on the Downs were enjoyed. Cassandra was a frequent visitor and the old family friend Martha Lloyd became their stepmother in 1828.

The sources from which a picture of life at Portsdown Lodge may be drawn exist in the Admiral's memoirs, in Knight and Austen-Leigh records and in the various writings of his daughter and her son John Hubback, who recorded vivid personal impressions of his grandfather's household, in which he spent much of his early life.[4]

Catherine wrote stories and light verse, but also exercised her talent for drawing with clever studies of the family's social and sporting activities.[5] Thus we can see her brothers at net practice and archery and read her verses on the subject:

> Brother rest! thy cricket done,
> For the dinner bell is ringing

Rest for each succeeding sun
Still more cricket will be bringing.

Rest! thy bat is in its case –
Rest from all the joys of cricket
Rest – nor deem it a disgrace
Herbert should bowl down thy wicket.[6]

Henry, Catherine's favourite brother, was a copious versifier who copied out numerous poems and charades with a fine flourish of penmanship. A verse letter to his cousin Fanny, daughter of Admiral Charles Austen, runs to over thirty eight-line stanzas and he later sent an acrostic on her full name, Fanny Palmer Austen. It opens on a wry note:

*F*anny since long I have expected
*A*n answer due from you to my last letter,
*N*ow I proceed to make you more my debtor,
*N*ot cross though grieved, not sullen though dejected,
*Y*et much annoyed at being thus neglected ...

Henry Edgar seems to have resembled his Uncle Henry, the most volatile of the Austens, but he did not have the same self-confidence. It was his elder brother, a naval officer, who eventually married Fanny. Henry's enthusiasm for dancing was enlarged with the advent of a rather shocking innovation, the waltz, which allowed a new type of embrace described by Henry with sensual satisfaction in one of his poems, and later writing to his sister from London, recalling an occasion in Hampshire:

What though no Harriet lent her pliant waist
In giddy waltz by me to be embraced,
Think you no damsel in this mighty city
Can waltz or laugh, be artless or be witty.
One girl, as I was waltzing with her stumbled
And but for my support she must have tumbled
As t'was she fell with me upon'r
Which would have been unpleasant on my honour.

Little of Catherine's early verse has survived, but a parody of Cowper's 'The poplars are fell'd' has a certain charm and reminds us that Portsmouth was a garrison town as well as a naval base.

The rifles are gone and farewell has been said
In a whisper by each to his favourite maid
And the maidens all sigh as each soldier takes leave
And deep in their bosom each his image receive.

Yes, the rifles are gone and no more shall we meet
Those dear elegant men in the rooms or the street.
The parade where their bugles oft charmed us before
Shall ring to such sweet sounding music no more.



Catherine Hubback, The Ball, 1836

Tis a sign to remind us if anything can
Of the vagabond life of this green rifle man
Though the red coat goes soon, yet the green coat we see
Changes quarters more rapidly even than he.

The brothers also departed – two to the Navy, Henry to Oxford and the Inner Temple where he made friends with a fellow barrister, John Hubback. In 1842 Catherine became Mrs John Hubback. Her husband was hard-working and very successful while Henry lamented his choice of profession in two of his verse letters:

Law – always hateful – most so when it winds
lts tangled meshes round unwilling minds.
I hate the law – and Equity's a worse
More undefined, more arbitrary curse.

In his variation on Cowper he regrets the departure of a family of young girls from neighbouring Purfleet whose company he has much enjoyed:

My fleeting Vacation is passing away
And I shall be soon as far distant as they
With a gown on my back and a wig on my head,
E'er another such family comes in their stead.

Unfortunately the gown was not on his back as often as he might have wished,

as another verse letter recounts:

So I a briefless barrister
Am haunted by a busy clerk,
Who every morning comes with 'Sir'
'I should be glad, Sir, of some work.'

Catherine had a firmer character than Henry and her literary talent was turned to better account. After her marriage, if she wrote verse at all, it had a serious purpose and instead of satirical drawing she produced a number of carefully executed watercolours. She was greatly influenced by Keble's *The Christian Year* and retained all her life the copy she had received as a wedding present, adding lavish decorations in the margins. She found consolation in Keble when her first child only lived long enough to be baptised. Later she had three sons, but then her successful hard-working husband suffered a severe mental breakdown. His collapse imposed on her prematurely the role of matriarch and protector, and she turned to her religion with even greater fervour. Such poetry as she wrote in later years was deeply felt and strictly confined to meditative reflections on the trials imposed on her by the events of her life. John Hubback never recovered. Catherine took her family to Portsdown Lodge and from 1851 onwards she produced a steady sequence of novels often dealing with the unhappy situation of women, victims of law and custom when their marriages failed through no fault of their own. Autumn sunset seen from Portsdown inspired her to produce two versions of a poem in which nature lies calm and her own mind is released from its troubles:

A mind at rest, because serenely Hopeful –
Happy, because it gazes up in Love,
And sees by faith thro' the still brightening future.

But feelings of grief and personal loss are expressed in less derivative language and with more force in poems which resulted from a friendship with the Revd Aaron Foster. She stayed with him and his wife on several occasions at Wells where he was one of the Vicars Choral. In verses addressed to him she reverts to joyful memories of her childhood and moves on to refer indirectly to the tragic, unexpected disasters of her married life and the loneliness of which his friendship and his teaching had relieved her. These later poems are with one exception of biographical rather than literary interest. It is clear that Foster helped her to achieve Christian resignation. The last of her extant poems, dated 1855, is by far her most accomplished and original work, more in the style of one of Browning's shorter *Dramatic Lyrics* than of *The Christian Year*, though it is unlikely that she had read Browning. Her gift, as the novels revealed, was for story-telling rather than poetry, but *The Two Honey-Suckles* is a narrative poem with an allegorical message, expressing a resigned, philosophical outlook. Taken with other verses addressing Foster by name, the story of an actual friendship is plainly conveyed. She sees herself in both a religious and a personal relationship to Aaron Foster, expressing affection through the gift of two young plants; one is planted by the church porch and it flourishes, the other by a wall within the vicar's private garden where it withers away uncared for. The poem has technical weaknesses but would



Catherine Hubback, The singing young Gentleman, c. 1836.

not have disgraced a Christina Rossetti collection.

Catherine Hubback emigrated to California in 1870 to take care of her unmarried son, who was in business there. Later she moved to be with her third son, who was trying to make a living in Virginia. From America she sent back a stream of letters[7] to John Hubback and his wife. They provided vivid description, sometimes critical, of what she experienced, but she remained lively, cheerful and active in mind and body. Occasionally these letters seem to raise an echo of Jane Austen as when she chides her son, 'I don't think you need to pity me for any part of my Californian life unless it is that stockings wear out so fast.'

The Two Honey-Suckles – or Friendship

'Lonicera fleruosa I should like to have,'
Said the Vicar to the Lady 'Grant the boon I crave.'

Kindly feelings, fingers prompting, Two small shoots are planted.
Watered, nursed and duly tended, And the boon is granted.
One is placed beside the Church Porch, All who pass may see!
'Keep the other in your garden, For my sake,' said she.
By the Church door oft she pauses, That plant's growth to trace;
Marks its slender branches springing, Stretching forth apace.
Harsh winds shake it, to the rough wall, 'Tis in vain to cling,
Flints repel its soft embraces, Yet tis flourishing!
Yes, for deep its root descendeth, Deep and out of sight,
Giving strength while each thin branchlet, Upward seeks the light!
Once the Lady seeks the garden, And her glances fall
On a wild neglected corner, Underneath the wall.
There coarse weeds o'ertop her nursling, Cobwebs wrap it round,
Vainly for the light it struggles, Crushed into the ground!
From the wall which should uphold it, Rudely torn away,
Straggled all along the border, One thin sickly spray.

Other fancies time engrossing, He had ceased to care
For the shrub which with such good-will She had planted there!
Sad she turned with sober footstep, Musing goes her way,
Takes the lesson home to study, she has learnt that day.
'Emblems yes,' she said, 'of Friendship such as men possess,
That which courts the public notice, That they guard and dress,
I had hoped,' she said, 'by kindness Friendship true to earn,
Now I will renounce such folly, from these visions turn.
Henceforth mine, to learn the lesson the Church-plant affords!
There, where all like me may profit by his spoken words.
But since he had thus neglected, Crushed, and trampled down
That – we can be friends no longer – I am wiser grown.'

DAVID HOPKINSON

Notes

1 D. Selwyn, ed. Jane Austen *Collected Poems and Verse of the Austen Family* (Carcanet, with the Jane Austen Society, 1996).
2 D. Le Faye, ed. *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen*, Jane Austen Society 1986.
3 R.W. Chapman, ed. *Jane Austen's Letters*, Oxford University Press, 1932, no. 134.
4 J.H. Hubback, *Cross Currents in a Long Life*, privately printed, 1935.
5 Diana Hopkinson, 'Peepshow on Victorian life – Catherine Hubback's sketch books', *Country Life*, March 1978.
6 For Catherine Hubback's drawing of cricket at Portsdown see *Report* for 1983.
7 David Hopkinson, 'A Niece of Jane Austen', *Notes and Queries*, vol. 31, 1981.

Jane Austen in Bath: 4 Sydney Place

The Austens lived in Bath between 1801 and 1805, following the Revd Mr Austen's retirement from the living at Steventon. They took the remaining three years of a lease at 4 Sydney Place. This was one of the last of the grand Georgian terraces to be built, having been completed in 1794, before the economic recession of the Napoleonic wars halted construction work for twenty years.

Sydney Place lies at the far end of Pulteney Street, opposite Sydney Gardens, then known as the Sydney-Gardens Vauxhall. The plan had been to construct Sydney Place in six terraces, forming a large hexagon around Sydney Gardens. Only two of the terraces were completed. In 1801, this was a very desirable location, on the edge of the built-up area of the city, with green fields all around. We have a copy of the advertisement in the *Bath Chronicle* to which they responded. The rent was £150 per annum, which was relatively cheap because there was only the tail-end of the lease remaining. Mr Austen's pension was £600 per annum, and they wondered whether they could afford it, but the attractions of Sydney Place were such that

they were persuaded. To convert these sums to our modern currency, adjusting for inflation only, one should multiply by sixty; the rent was thus equivalent to £9000 per annum and the pension to £36,000 per annum. Because there was considerably less real wealth around, compared to modern times, these sums had correspondingly greater value.

Sydney Gardens was modelled on Vauxhall Gardens in London. It was a lively venue, especially in summer. There were grand galas each year, and a regular programme of events, including breakfast dances. The gardens provided the opportunity for delightful walks, and still do today; the Kennet and Avon canal running through had then recently been completed.

4 Sydney Place has four stories, plus a basement. The ground floor has an entrance hall and two rooms; the front room would have been the parlour and dining room, used for everyday entertainment, and the rear room would most likely have been Mr Austen's study. On the first floor, there is a magnificent drawing room, covering the full area of the house, which looks south over Sydney Gardens; the windows are large, and it is a very sunny room.

On the second floor there are three bedrooms; the parents would have slept in one, and another would have been occupied by the two sisters – they shared a bedroom all their lives. The top floor has another three bedrooms, where the servants would have slept. The kitchen in the basement is reached by stairs from the ground floor. There is a small walled garden, in which there would have been an earth closet; the water closet had not yet been invented, although there was piped water to the house.

The Deeds to No. 4 Sydney Place are locked in our solicitor's vault. They go right back to the contract for the original construction dated 1792, and are a complete record of all legal matters affecting the ownership since. They do not include details of tenancy, so there is no mention of the Austens. But they provide some interesting information about the time when the Austens lived there.

Until late in the eighteenth century the city of Bath was bounded by the loop of the River Avon, which is like one side of a figure of eight. The main Georgian redevelopment of the city took place within these bounds. The Bathwick Estate lay on the other side of the river, and it was an obvious prospect for property development. It was owned by the Pulteney family, and it had taken them three generations to clear it of agricultural tenancies. After much wheeling and dealing with the City Council, Mr Pulteney built his famous bridge across the Avon during the 1770s. Over the next twenty years there followed the construction of Pulteney Street and some adjacent streets, including the first two terraces of Sydney Place. Among the builders operating in Pulteney Street was a family firm called Lewis. In 1788 a contract was drawn up between the father, Thomas Lewis, and Henrietta Laura Pulteney (afterwards the Countess of Bath) to construct Nos. 1- 5 Sydney Place. Soon after this, Thomas died intestate, so the contract became null and void.

A new contract was drawn up in 1792 between Thomas's son Charles and Henrietta Laura, and this is the one we have in our possession. Written on parchment,

it is in perfect condition. It includes the conveyance of land from the Pulteneys to the Lewises, on a 100 year lease subject to payment of ground rents. It also includes the original planning permission which was a drawing of what the front of the terrace should look like (the Bath architects seemed only concerned with the fronts of their houses and so were the planning authorities; the builders could put whatever they wanted at the back!). It contains the signatures of Henrietta Laura, Thomas Baldwin, the famous Bath architect, and the Lewis brothers Charles and Thomas junior. The latter was still a minor, and it is likely that they were both young men. The construction had to be completed by the end of March 1794, at a cost of not less than £700 per house (£42,000 in today's money).

The covenants also included the obligations:

to place lamps during the first 8 years of the said term in front of the Houses intended to be erected on the said plots of Ground and to keep same lighted and in repair...

and that said Lewis would rebuild said Messuages in case of destruction by fire...

that said Lewis would insure said Messuages and Buildings against loss by fire and expend all monies to be received from any insurance office in rebuilding said premises ...

Also included was the stipulation that

it should be lawful for the said Henrietta Laura Pulteney to convey Soft Water in and through a sufficient number of principal pipes to the said premises... with good and wholesome soft water at such price or prices as the Corporation of Bath should for the time being supply Houses in the said City of Bath having regard to the yearly rent of such Houses respectively...

And further

it should be lawful for said H. L. Pulteney... on account of such refusal of payment or unreasonable waste of water or other improper conduct to cut off every such feather pipe or pipes that convey the said water...

Later covenants included

permit all wall (garden) or walls which then were or should be or might be erected... to be made of ashlar not to be less than 8 inches thick and of rough stone not to be less than 14 inches thick... and also that no wall or walls should be higher than 7 feet above the level of the parlour floors and that such walls should be covered with the best hard freestone coping 3 1/2 inches thick and 4 inches wider than the breadth of the wall...

Also

would not keep or feed Pigs, Ducks, Geese, Rabbits, or any other Offensive Animals or Birds in or on the said premises in such a manner as to produce a noisome smell to the occupier or occupiers of the Ground adjacent to the said premises...

and also would not at any time or times thereafter deposit, lay, or throw or allow, permit or suffer to be deposited laid or thrown in or upon the said foot and carriage ways thereafter mentioned any dung, muck, soil, decayed vegetables, refuse or

garden stuff, rubbish or any other offensive matter or thing whatsoever...

The trades not allowed to be pursued at No. 4 Sydney Place included Tanner, Skinner, Furrier, Fishmonger, Leather dresser, Blacksmith, Brightsmith, Cooper, Coppersmith, Farrier, Butcher, Slaughterman, Fishmonger, Melting tallow chandler, Soap boiler, Plumber, Pewter, Brazier or Publican.

The construction appears to have been completed on time, and conformed with the covenants. The Lewis brothers were the owners of the long leasehold (effectively a freehold), having built it as a speculative development for letting. There was an assignment by Thomas Lewis junior in 1796, and by 1798 Charles Lewis was the sole owner. Charles died on 12 November 1798, leaving his estate in trust for his infant daughter Elizabeth, born in 1791. We tried to find a copy of his death certificate, to see what caused his death, as he must have been a relatively young man, even for those times. Unfortunately, the records have not survived.

The executors of Charles Lewis's will, and trustees to the young Elizabeth, were Samuel Ward, a gentleman, and George Stothert, an ironmonger. The estate included No. 4 Sydney Place. The letting would have been conducted through an agent.

The advertisement to which the Austens responded appeared in the *Bath Chronicle* of 28 May 1801:

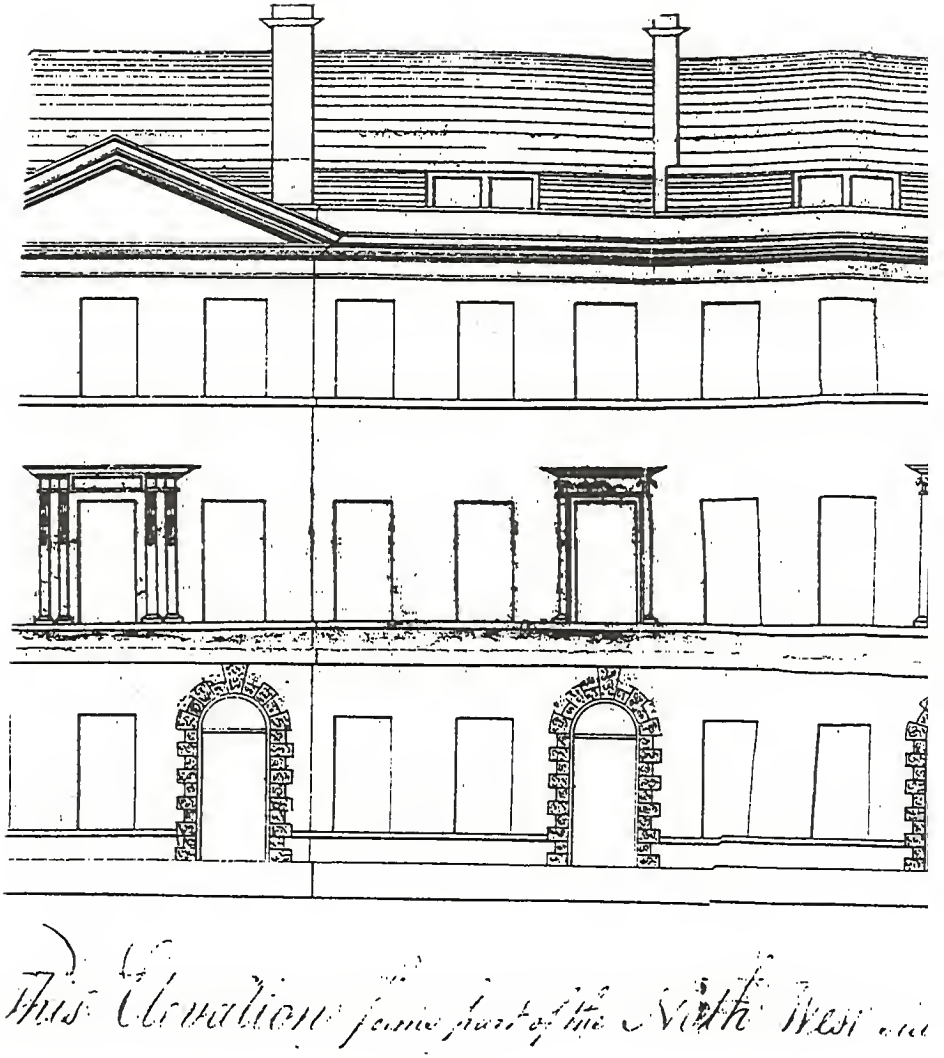
> TO BE DISPOSED OF,
> THE LEASE of No. 4 SYDNEY-PLACE,
> three years and a quarter of which are unexpired
> at Midsummer, – The situation is desirable, the Rent
> very low, and the Landlord is bound by covenant to
> paint the two first floors this summer, – A premium will
> therefore be expected.
> For particulars apply to Messrs. Watts and Forth in
> Cornwall-Buildings, Bath. (804)

When they moved in, the Austens' landlord – who was bound by covenant to paint the two first floors beforehand – was thus a 10-year-old girl!

At this time road communications were poor, and it was impracticable to move furniture over a distance such as that between Steventon and Bath. The Austens would have sold their furniture in Hampshire, and bought new in Bath. They would have brought some smaller and personal items with them, and it is said that these included Jane's writing-desk.

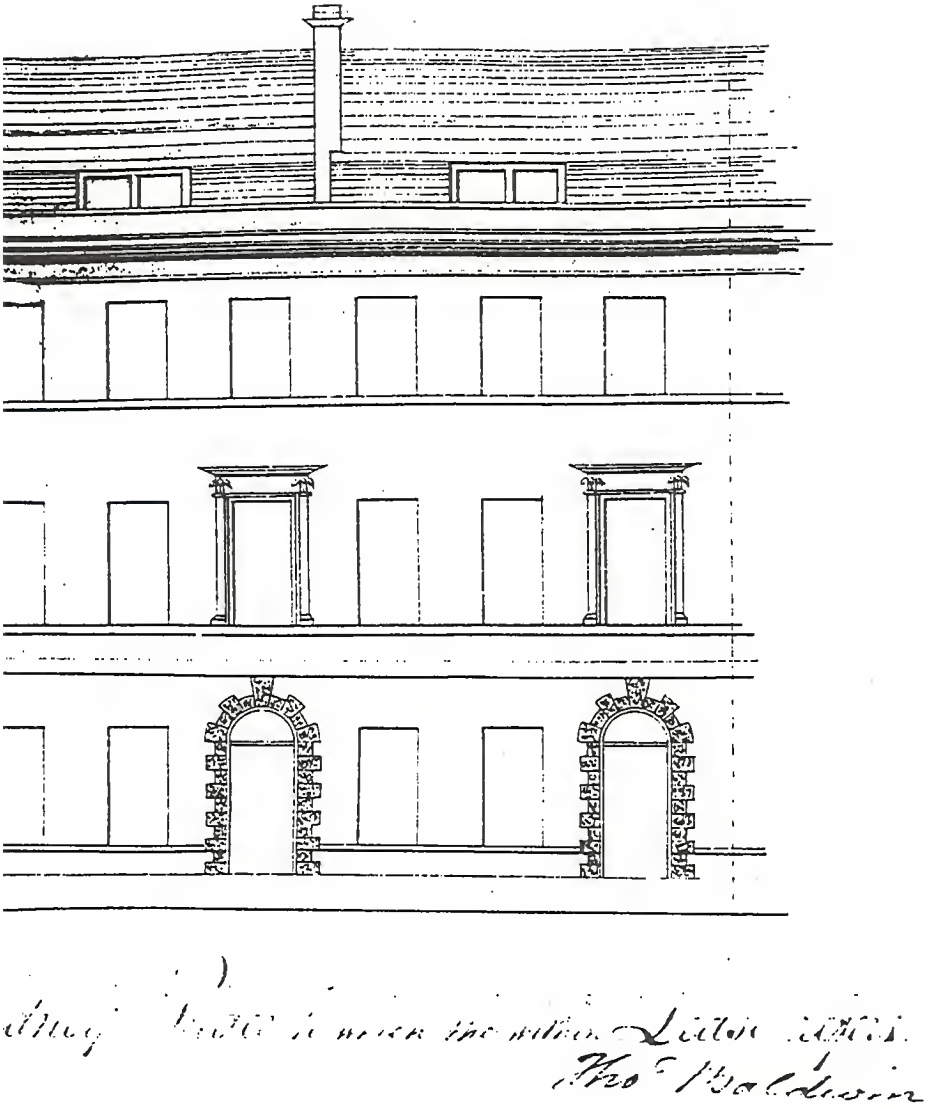
The Austens were involved in the social activities of Bath to some extent, but they were a close-knit family, and it is likely that most of their entertainment revolved around their own home. They would have walked into Bath on most days, and regularly took much longer walks, for example to Beechen Cliff and to the village of Charlecombe. They spent periods away from the city, visiting relatives in other parts of the country, and taking summer holidays at Lyme Regis.

During the year 1804 the family had to consider that the lease would shortly expire, and renewal would require an increase in rent. It was decided they would



not be able to afford it, and left No. 4 before it expired, in September – exactly three years after they had moved in. Mr Austen died three months later in Green Park Buildings and was buried in Walcot Church. Mrs Austen and her daughters were now in reduced circumstances, and lived for short periods at addresses in Trim Street and Gay Street before finally moving back to Hampshire.

Elizabeth Lewis came of age in 1812, eight years after the Austens had moved on, and inherited the house in her own right. Shortly after this she married a Robert Hoskins Margerum, also of Bath. Their son, Robert Charles Margerum, was born in 1817. When he in turn came of age, in 1838, they started borrowing money, on the



security of the house. In fact, they borrowed progressively more and more money, from various private sources but especially from an Edward Gibbons, a grocer of Bath. Within five years their debts amounted to £875, including rolled-up interest (£52,500 in today's money). In this year, 1843, Edward Gibbons paid them a final £115, making £990 in total, and took the house. This seems a very full valuation, in the context of the various transactions during the century (when there was no inflation), and we had the impression that Mr Gibbons became a distressed lender, and paid a full value to get rid of them. While in his offices reading the Deeds, we mentioned this to our solicitor, but he replied 'Ah, No ... Edward Gibbons! A

well-known Bath money-lender!'

Gibbons then sold the house to the sitting tenant, a Thomas Gill. This is the only occasion in the history of the house that it became owner-occupied. Apart from this, both before and since, it has always been let to tenants. Elizabeth died in 1841 at the age of 50.

As a footnote, we have a charming little poem written by Mrs Cassandra Austen. While living at No 4, she was at one point extremely ill, and nearly died. On recovering, she wrote this:

Dialogue between Death and Mrs. A

Says Death .... 'I've been trying these three weeks or more
To seize on Old Madam here at Number Four,
Yet I still try in vain, tho she's turn'd of threescore;
To what is my ill success oweing?'

'I'll tell you, old Fellow, if you cannot guess,
To what you're indebted for your ill success;
To the prayers of my Husband, whose love I possess,
To the care of my daughters, whom Heaven will bless,
To the skill and attention of BOWEN.

Doctor Bowen was an apothecary who operated a partnership from premises in Laura Place, at the other end of Pulteney Street. It is still a chemist's shop today.

MICHAEL DAVIS

'Jane Austen not here' – Virger

In his *Memoir* of Jane Austen of 1870, James Edward Austen-Leigh related the anecdote of the virger in Winchester Cathedral who, while pointing out Jane Austen's grave, asked, 'Pray, sir, can you tell me whether there was anything particular about that lady; so many people want to know where she was buried?'[1] A far more surprising example of ignorance by the cathedral staff occurred in June 1893, when the literary figure Clement K. Shorter asked the man who received the customary fee where Jane Austen was buried, only to receive the assurance that there was no tomb inscribed with that name. As the editor of the *Illustrated London News*, Shorter was visiting the city in connection with the College's five-hundredth anniversary celebration.

By then, the memorial brass to her on the wall opposite the grave had been in place since 1872.[2] Moreover, as Brian Southam has shown, 'by the 1880s the Jane Austen cult was widely advertised' so that perhaps the city itself sought to stand apart from what Leslie Stephen had called 'Austenolatry'.[3] Shorter in passing took the Dean, Dr George Kitchin, to task for not having mentioned her in his recent book on Winchester.

Although Shorter's principal literary work was on the Brontës, he certainly did not share the dismissive view of Charlotte Brontë, that Jane Austen was a

'very incomplete, and rather insensible... woman'.[4] Instead, he wrote with some hyperbole, 'that she was the greatest of her sex is now scarcely disputed by any competent person'. Her novels, he continued,

> have become part of the accepted literary creed of all intelligent men and women. Her delicate fancy, her delicious humour are as palpable as the inimitable characterisation which gave us Fanny Price and Emma Woodhouse and Anne Elliot, and the rest of that famous gallery. It has been said that Dickens has fixed modern humanity for us in types, but, before Dickens, Jane Austen had done this with a finer artistic sense; and Mr Bennet and Mr Collins are as convincing as any creatures of the literary imagination that the world has ever known.[5]

As Shorter quoted its inscription in full, he must eventually have found in the north aisle the black marble ledger-stone marking the grave of the author he revered with all the fervour of Austenolatry.

T. A. B. CORLEY

Notes

1 James Edward Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen* (1870. new edn, London: Century, 1987), p. 117.
2 Jane Austen Society *Collected Reports 1949-1965* (1967), pp. 214-5.
3 B.C. Southam, ed., *Jane Austen, The Critical Heritage* 2, 1870-1940, (London: Routledge, 1987), 37.
4 B.C. Southam, ed., *Jane Austen, The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1968) p. 128.
5 CKS, 'At the Tomb of Jane Austen', *Illustrated London News*, 29 July 1893, 130.

Jane Austen's American Readers

Americans were stung when Sydney Smith, arbiter of literary taste, asked in a review of Seybert's *Annals of United* States *(Edinburgh Review,* Jan. 1820), 'In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?'

Adverse comments from foreigners and fellow Americans provoked Samuel Lorenzo Knapp (1783-1838), a strong literary nationalist, to announce his intention to publish by subscription 'A Course of Lectures on American Literature, with remarks on some passages of American History'. A popular Massachusetts hack writer, Knapp aimed to provide a panoramic effect of the whole'.[1] His 1829 publication omitted Cooper who had published seven acclaimed novels and gave brief mention to Washington Irving and Charles Brockden Browne while including chapters on 'The Naval Character of our Country' and other dubious literary material.

Americans were reading English novels and in 1815 a young visitor to London wrote to his mother about his uncle's enjoyment of Jane Austen's works. 'I think I mentioned in a previous letter that he had praised her S*ense and Sensibility.* She

has now published *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park,* and from them my uncle proposes to have obtained a higher degree of enjoyment than he had done from any novel since *John Buncle.* I do not myself care for them. They seem to me tame and commonplace, with nothing to excite the fancy or fire the spirit. They are, however, attracting a considerable number of readers, especially among those of a somewhat fastidious literary taste.'[2] Readers of *The Life of John Buncle, Esq.,* published in two volumes (1756 and 1766), followed a man's fantastic travels around England. He rationalized his seven marriages by saying 'a dead woman is no wife, and marriage is ever glorious.'[3]

The young American's needs were filled by James Cooper who published his first novel, *Precaution,* in 1820. Hastings wrote, 'I am firmly convinced that in *Precaution* he attempted an elaborate imitation in plot and character of a definite English novel, and that that novel is Jane Austen's *Persuasion.*'[4] *Precaution* was not popular but Cooper's second book, *The Spy* (1821), patterned on Scott's historical novels and acknowledged as the first successful American novel, sold 8,000 copies in the first four months. Carey & Lea published the first edition of *Emma* in 1816 (prompted, David Gilson believes, by Scott's unsigned review in *The Quarterly Review* of October 1815, published in March 1816, which hailed it as 'the modern novel') and the complete novels in 1832-33 starting with the re-titled *Elizabeth Bennett; or, Pride and Prejudice: a Novel.* Gilson says the 1832-33 editions were changed to include not only different spelling and punctuation but also bowdlerized for American sensibilities so that 'Good Lord' became 'Indeed', 'By G—' omitted, and so on.

Chief Justice John Marshall (1755-1835) bought many books and by 1826 had read all of Austen's works. He chided his good friend and colleague Judge Joseph Story (1779-1845) for omitting her name from a list of authors cited in a Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard. A biographical entry noted Marshall's influence: 'His favourite novelist was Jane Austen. As a result, he tells us, of observing the intellectual attainments of the girls in the mixed classes which as a boy he attended at Marblehead Academy, he was an active champion for the higher education of women.'[5] Story is one of many early American Austen readers who believed in and worked for equal education for women.

Marshall and Story came from vastly different backgrounds but were similarly motivated to excel. Born on the Virginia frontier, Marshall was schooled by his father and local clerics. He first left the wilderness at twenty, after which he attended classes at William & Mary College. Story went to Marblehead Academy as one of its first pupils but left before graduation and completed preparation for Harvard College virtually unaided. Afterwards he studied law in Marblehead.

Story, who became a Harvard professor, mentioned the novels to Mrs Josiah Quincy, wife of Harvard's president, who wrote recommending them in 1835 to a friend, Mrs John Brown, in Kentucky: 'They were first mentioned to us by Judge Story, to whom they were recommended by Judge Marshall. High authority, certainly, certainly.'[6]

The Quincy women became Austen devotees and Eliza Susan, one of the five

daughters, wrote to Admiral Sir Francis Austen in 1852 for an autographed letter. He obliged with one Jane had written from Steventon to Martha Lloyd at Ibthorpe in November 1800, No. 26 in Chapman's second edition of the letters, incorrectly listed as being in the New York Public Library. In compiling her facsimile edition of the letters, Jo Modert found it in the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston together with letters from the Admiral to the Quincys and two letters from James Edward Austen-Leigh.

The journals and letters of the Quincy sisters reveal a closeknit family with Anna Cabot Lowell Quincy writing to her sisters telling them of life at home when they were travelling. Anna became the wife of the Revd Robert Waterston, published verses and an article on Jane Austen in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1863. She was a supporter of the Boston Woman's Education Association founded in 1871 to promote industrial intellectual, aesthetic, moral and physical education.

Another early reader was William Dunlap (1766-1839), whose 1833 diary recorded his delight in reading Miss Austin's [*sic*] *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility.* A versatile playwright, theatrical manager, painter and historian, Dunlap wrote a *History of the American Theatre* (1832) and a *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in U.S.* (1834).

Samuel Knapp gave Jane Austen her first formal notice and criticism in his *Female Biography* (1834) when he described her as a highly gifted and sensible writer of novels 'which for ease, nature, and a complete knowledge of the features which distinguish the domesticity of the English country gentry', were very highly estimated.[7] He incorrectly listed *Northenger* [*sic*] *Abbey* and *Persuasion* as her early attempts.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's journal of 1839 showed that he was amusing himself with Miss Austin's [*sic*] novels although he felt the minuteness of detail explained too much. Benjamin Franklin, however, in his autobiography praised her for her minuteness, saying, 'Miss Austen – dear Miss Austen who never says a brilliant thing, nor paints a perfect character, – who is neither witty, nor passionate, nor eloquent, is still minute, homelike, and true; and by these qualities alone, she twines about the inmost fibres of her readers' hearts.'[8]

W. A. Jones, Librarian at Columbia College 1861-65, regarded Austen as 'sensible' and in *Literary Studies: A collection of Miscellaneous Essays* (1847) compared Miss Austin [*sic*] with Fredrika Bremer, saying that Bremer and Austen resembled each other in being writers of the domestic novel: 'yet Miss Austin [*sic*] is quite deficient in the strikingly poetical qualities, which relieve even the homeliest details of the Swedish novels. She is quite prosaic, and if possible a little exclusive; perhaps too much taken up with titled personages'.[9]

A Swedish novelist and feminist, the intrepid Fredrika Bremer (1801-65) visited the United States between 1849 and 1861, travelling widely and meeting many noted people. Her open mind, indefatigable spirit and enthusiasm for all things American (except cold bedrooms and tiring dinners) endeared her to an already receptive public. She detailed her experiences in *Homes of the New World* (1853) while her letters from the States were published posthumously as *America of the*

Fifties (1924).

Despite increasing biographical entries, Brian Southam says Jane Austen's reputation was more private than public, a view shared by John Foster Kirk in 1853. Kirk, as secretary to the historian William H. Prescott, visited England in 1850, wrote historical and critical papers for the *North American Review,* was editor of *Lippincott's Magazine,* lectured on European History at Penn and edited a two-volume supplement to *Allibone's Critical Dictionary of English Literature.* Kirk said in reviewing Thackeray's works: 'In placing Jane Austen in the same rank with Fielding and Thackeray, we do not expect to meet with general assent. In this country, at least, her writings have not acquired popularity. This may, perhaps, be owing to the narrow limits and almost unbroken level of the society which she paints.'[10]

Echoing Jane Austen's own remarks revealed with the publication of the letters, Kirk acknowledged legitimate obstacles for American readers unfamiliar with and constitutionally distanced from an hierarchical English society and its mores.

Emerson was such an early reader and critic who wrote in 1861: 'I am at a loss to understand why people hold Miss Austen's novels at so high a rate, which seem to me vulgar in tone, sterile in artistic invention, imprisoned in the wretched conventions of English society, without genius, wit, or knowledge of the world.'[11]

Jane Austen found favour with Sarah Hale, who influenced generations of American women as contributor and editor of *Godey's Lady's Book,* the best known of American women's magazines. She included her in her *Woman's Record or Sketches of Distinguished Women* (1853 and subsequent editions), a history of women and their influence on society and literature in 36 volumes. She wrote of Jane Austen: 'Her beauty, worth, and genius, made her death deeply lamented. The consumption, of which she died, seemed only to increase her mental powers. The great charm of Miss Austen's works lie in their truth and simplicity, and in their high finish and naturalness.'[12] The entry included Henry Austen's biographical notice and excerpts from *Northanger Abbey.*

Hale, who was taught at home, worked to support her five children after her husband's death and continued writing until she was 90. Her campaign for the formal education of women by women influenced Matthew Vassar. She is best remembered as the author of the poem 'Mary had a little lamb' published in *Poems for our children* (1830).

Recognition also came from Evert Augustus Duyckink (1816-78) who added Jane Austen to his *Portrait Gallery of Eminent Men and Women of Europe and America,* 1873. Duyckink travelled in Europe during 1838-39, after which he and his brother George became prominent in the literary world editing weekly reviews and collaborating in the *Cyclopaedia of American Literature* (1855, revised 1866), a comprehensive and scholarly reference work still available.

The *Memoir of Jane Austen* published by her nephew James Edward Austen-Leigh in 1870 created increased interest in the author, her world and, eventually, her work. Many were entranced by the Portrait of such an exemplary woman and

found it hard to separate the fiction of the novels from the facts of her life. Howells was to comment, 'It shows how really excellent her work is that it survives the adoration of so many upper-class worshippers.'[13]

Jane Austen's entry in a multi-volume, *Pen-portraits of literary women by themselves and others* (1887), edited by Helen Gray Cone and Jeannette Leonard, was taken from the testimony of her nephew and the internal evidence of her books[14] and included further testimony from Sir Egerton Brydges, Sara Coleridge, Mrs R.C. Waterston, Charlotte Bronte and many early favourable reviewers.

In 1888, in a volume titled *Women and men,* Thomas Wentworth Higginson said that while Madame D'Arblay (Fanny Burney), Miss Porter, Mrs Opie and Miss Edgeworth were then little read, Miss Austen's novels were timely. Higginson (1823-1911) was a voracious reader who graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School. He became Colonel of the first Negro Regiment in the Union Army, the 1st South Carolina Volunteers, whose service he documented in *Life of a Black Regiment* (1870). A reformer in the areas of abolition and woman's suffrage, he was an early contributor to *Atlantic Monthly.*

Education at Harvard became more liberal when Charles W. Eliot (1834-1926), president 1869-1909, introduced the elective system of undergraduate studies. In 1883 a Harvard dissertation on Jane Austen's Novels written by George Pellew won the Bowdoin or Ballston prize. William Dean Howells said this work pioneered the new Austen criticism – one that studied, classified and registered. Pellew, who later became an author and journalist, was born in England. He was a grandson of John Jay, whose life he wrote in the American Statesmen series 1890.

Charles Townsend Copeland (1860-1952) was a Harvard professor who included Jane Austen in his famous English 12, influencing a litany of readers and future writers such as Conrad Aiken, Brooks Atkinson, Robert Benchley, Van Wyck Brooks, Bernard DeVoto, T. S. Eliot and Robert Sherwood.

Copeland wrote an article in 1893 contrasting and comparing the works of Miss Austen and Miss Ferrier. Susan Ferrier, a friend of Sir Walter Scott, was admired by Sydney Smith and Macaulay for her novels *Marriage* (1818), *The Inheritance* (1824), and *Destiny* (1831). A modest spinster, she insisted on the destruction of correspondence with a sister but her private life was revealed in 1898 by the *Memoir and correspondence of Susan Ferrier 1782-1854 . Based on her private correspondence in the possession of, and collected by, her grand-nephew John Ferrier.*

Affectionately known as Copey, Copeland was revered by students who founded the Charles Townsend Copeland Association, 1906-37, which met annually in New York. Membership was made up of E12 alums with Alexander Woollcott, Mackenzie King, Laurance Stallings and Thornton Wilder admitted as honorary members. A biography, *Copey of Harvard*, was published in 1960.

Professors at other major universities increased Austen readership by their teaching and scholarship. Notre Dame professor Maurice Francis Egan (1852-1924) mentioned her in *An introduction to English Literature* (1901), and in his essay on women writers in *Lectures on English Literature* he compared her to Lady

Georgiana Fullerton. Fullerton (1812-1885) was an English novelist who lived in Rome, converted to the Catholic Church, founded the Poor Servants of the Mother of God Incarnate and took the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul to England.

A Yale academic, Wilbur C. Cross, provided scholarly Austen criticism in *The Development of the Novel, a* standard college text which influenced countless readers: published in 1899, it was reprinted twenty-six times until 1923 and remained in print many years afterwards. Known to his students as 'Uncle Toby' because of his Sterne studies, Cross attended a one-room schoolhouse and worked in his brother's general store before entering Yale College. He became the first Sterling Professor of English in 1922, Dean of the Graduate School, and after university retirement served as governor of Connecticut from 1931-39.

Those outside academe were informed by writers like William Dean Howells (1837-1920), who influenced American literary taste for over 50 years. He was editor-in-chief of *Atlantic Monthly* (1871-81), seeking and featuring new writers, the occupant of the 'Editor's Easy Chair' section in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* (1901-21), and noted for both his fiction and criticism. A champion of European writers, Howells revered Jane Austen but his fulsome praise antagonized those who could not appreciate her work and some who did.

Howells' great friend Mark Twain, was particularly vehement in his dislike of Jane Austen and made scurrilous comments in letters to Howells, who once responded, 'Now you're sick, I've a great mind to have it out with [you] about Jane Austen. If you say much more I'll come out and read *Pride and Prejudice* to you.'[15] Twain tried to like Jane Austen and George Eliot for Howells' sake but had to admit, '[I] confess to myself that I haven't any romance literature appetite, as far as I can see, except for your books.'[16]

Agnes Repplier, a great admirer of Austen, reprimanded Howells for calling the English 'those poor islanders'[17] because they loved George Eliot and Thackeray as well as Jane Austen. She wrote in *Literary Shibboleths* that the English loved Jane Austen; 'We all love her right heartily but we have no need to emulate good Queen Anne, who as Swift observed, had not a sufficient stock of amity for more than one person at a time.'[18] In *A Plea for Humor,* Repplier criticized Charlotte Brontë for lacking humor, 'one quality she lacked herself and failed to tolerate in others', and for regarding Jane Austen as dull.[19] Repplier (1855-1950) started writing at fifteen to support her family. With little formal education because her eccentricity and wilfulness caused her expulsion from two schools, she became an immensely popular writer for half a century and was recognized as a woman of letters with honorary degrees from Penn, Yale, Columbia, Marquette and Princeton.

Henry James was unwilling to pay Jane Austen his expected homage and, irritated by the tedious adulation of others, thought admiration for 'our dear, everybody's dear, Jane' clouded the objectivity of her critics.[20]

Howells wrote about divine Jane but still condemned those he termed 'little Londoners', writers who turned homage to Jane Austen and her English heritage into a profession. Oscar Fay Adams was an admirer who made her into a cottage industry. As well as *The Story of Jane Austen's Life* (1891) and several articles, he

published *Chapters from Jane Austen* (1889), an illustrated volume which provided lists of characters for each novel, the text of selected chapters and a connecting summary, a precursor of *Cliffs Notes*. Adams (1855-1919), a New England author and teacher, went to England to visit the places associated with her and talked with people who remembered her. Afterwards he wrote a letter to *The Critic* (1898) appealing for American contributions for a memorial window in Winchester Cathedral.

Another eulogizer was Elbert Hubbard (1856-1915), author, editor and master craftsman. Profoundly influenced by William Morris whom he met in England, he founded the Roycroft Shop, named after two 17th century English printers. Hubbard included Jane Austen in his book *Little journeys to the homes of famous women: Wherein are facts biographical and critical with other mention more intimate gathered in stray places on various sunshiny days.* This nineteenth century coffee table book was published in 1897 in an edition of 470, each volume numbered and signed.

Cheaper versions of the novels allowed wider readership with increasing numbers of biographies filling the needs of those interested in the author's life and background. A Handy Library edition of all the novels, fragments and letters was published in Boston in 1892 and Everyman's Library first published all but *Persuasion* in 1906.

The complete Austen family record of 1913 aided serious scholarship. After a doctoral dissertation in 1937 and another in 1949, the numbers fluctuated but rose gradually with a rapid increase in the 1980s and 1990s: in 1988 there were 22 and in 1993 a total of 25. By 1994 256 theses had been recorded.[21]

Random House published the complete novels in one volume in a 1933 Modern Library edition with *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* published separately later. The 1940 film version of *Pride and Prejudice* most certainly created a wider circle of novel readers: a documented survey by the New York Public Library demonstrated increased circulation of *Wuthering Heights* after that novel was filmed in 1939. [22]

The first edition of *Great Books of the Western World* (1952) in 54 volumes included *Emma* together with George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. In 1976 the Book of the Month Club distributed *Pride and Prejudice* with illustrations by Isabel Bishop. Original drawings for the illustrations were exhibited at the Midtown Galleries, New York, during November that year.

Cliffs Notes, study aids for those unwilling or unable to involve themselves seriously in the original works, were launched in 1958 covering sixteen Shakespearean plays. The following year *Pride and Prejudice Notes* were added, recognizing wide Austen readership in schools and colleges. This edition was revised in 1966 and 1982, followed by *Emma Notes* in 1967 and *Sense and Sensibility Notes* in 1969.

The initial meeting of the Jane Austen Society of North America took place in New York City on 5 October 1979 bonding forty-four patrons and 335 members who joined for a six-month period. By the end of 1996, 52 chapters were operating

in Canada and the United States, their members attending annual conferences.

An American reader, Sandy Lerner, rescued Chawton House from decay when the lease was purchased from the Knight family. A substantial infusion of money, energy and enthusiasm will restore the house and garden to become the Centre for the Study of Early English Women's Writing.

The New York Times Book Review finally recorded Jane Austen's paperback best-seller status on 21 January 1996, after the film version of *Sense and Sensibility* converted American viewers to readers. The BBC television production of *Pride and Prejudice* and the film versions of *Persuasion* and *Emma* doubtless created additional readers. Some may be like the writer of a Personals ad in the St Louis *Riverfront Times* 21-27 February 1996, who included Jane Austen, snorkeling and Meatloaf in her list of enjoyments under the heading 'Looking4Darcy'.

FARNELL PARSONS

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Notes on Sales 1997
First and Early Editions

Sense and Sensibility

The Heritage Bookshop of Los Angeles offered the first edition 1811 (Gilson A1), as item 74 in their catalogue 200, for $7,500. This was the Frank Hogan copy, mentioned on page 10 of Gilson's Bibliography, which has gone through several

sales misdescribed as all firsts with the half-title in Vol. 3 supplied from a copy of the second edition. It has now been discovered to be a made-up copy with Vol.3 being of the second edition.

Simon Finch had another copy in his catalogues 30 and 31 (items 2 and 8 respectively) for £11,500. This had the half-titles but not the final blanks and was rebound in contemporary style by Aquarius in full mottled calf, the spines retaining the original black double labels. Lot 148 in the Phillips sale of 13 March, estimated at £3,000-£5,900, sold for £3,800. This had the half-titles and was bound in contemporary sprinkled calf. Thomas Goldwasser had a set as item 42a in his catalogue 11 with all half-titles and final blanks, bound in dark brown calf in period style by Sangorski and Sutcliffe and with ownership signatures of F. Braddyll and M. Liverpool, for $17,500.

The second edition of 1813 (Gilson A2) was lot 20 at Christie's on 26 September. This lacked the half-titles, final blanks and front endpaper to Vol .3. It was partly uncut, in contemporary green cloth, inscribed E S B and with the bookplate of Benjamin Bickley Rogers. Estimated at £700-£1,000 this sold for £900. Jarndyce's catalogue 120 had two sets as items 47 and 48. Item 47, priced at £2,200, lacked the half-titles and was in contemporary half calf with the armorial bookplates of Alexr. R. Stewart. Item 48, in contemporary calf priced at £1,850, did have the half-titles and early ownership signatures of Helen Mure. (This is now on my shelves.)

The first American edition of 1833 (Gilson B6) was offered for £2,000 at the HD Book Fair in Bloomsbury on 21 June by Denis Goucy of Norfold, Connecticut. This included the advertisement leaf inserted at the beginning of Vol. 1 and the advertisement leaf present at the beginning of Vol. 2. Another copy, for which these leaves are not mentioned, appeared in Ian Hodgkins's catalogue 97 as item 23, for £200. Gilson D1 (the Bentley edition of 1833) was item 184 in Burmester's catalogue 35, in original plum-coloured linen, for £150.

Pride and Prejudice

The first edition of 1813 (Gilson A3), Vols 1 and 3 only, in contemporary calf and with the half-titles, was lot 314 in the Dominic Winter sale of 5 March. The estimate was £70-£100 but the hammer price was £1,550, despite its imperfect state and being worn and broken. Several copies of Gilson A5 (the third edition of 1817) were offered. In the Phillips sale at Bath on 6 October it was lot 190, stained throughout, with half-titles and in contemporary half calf – estimated at £150-£200 it sold for £620. Another copy was item 4 in Simon Finch's catalogue 30, for £1800, in contemporary polished half-calf and with contemporary ownership inscriptions of Mrs Brandling of Gosforth House, Northumberland. Maggs's catalogue 1235 had a copy as item 12 for £1,400 in contemporary brown polished calf but without half-titles. Jarndyce's catalogue 120 offered a copy as item 44 for £1,800, described as v.g., rebound in contemporary style.

Mansfield Park

As usual, very few copies have been offered. The second edition of 1816 (Gilson A7) was lot 191 at the Phillips sale in Bath on 6 October. In contemporary half

calf, with half-titles, this was estimated very low, at £100-£150 but sold for £470. Jarndyce's catalogue 120 had, as item 40, the Bentley 1833 edition (Gilson D3) for £150, in original plum-coloured linen.

Emma

The first edition of 1816 (Gilson A8) was lot 164 in the Phillips sale in Glasgow on 8 October, in contemporary half-calf and with the half-titles. Estimated at £2-£3,000 this sold for £5,700. The Phillips London sale of 13 November had a copy as lot 136, lacking the half-titles, in modern blue calf. This originally belonged to Jane Austen's great-nephew Arthur Henry Austen Leigh, who has signed the endpaper of Vol. 1. The estimate was £2,000-£3,000 the hammer price £2,200. Simon Finch had a copy appearing as items 9 and 12 in his catalogues 31 and 32 respectively, for £5,800 in 19th century brown calf morocco. The half-titles were present only in Vols 1 and 2. Item 39 handsomely rebound in the Jarndyce catalogue 120 was offered for £3,500.

Northanger Abbey and Persuasion

A copy of the first edition of 1818 (Gilson A9) reappeared in Quaritch's catalogue 1244, as item 2. This was the copy given by John Murray to Maria Edgeworth, first mentioned in my report for 1995. Inflation does not seem to have caught up with this copy, which was offered at the former price of £12,000. Dominic Winter, in the sale of 4 October, lot 410 had Vols 1 & 2 only, lacking both half-titles and the t.p. to Vol.1. It was estimated at £50-£80 and sold for £130. The 1837 Bentley edition (Gilson D4) was item 9 in the Ian Hodgkins catalogue 97 for £175.

Persuasion

The 1832 first American edition (Gilson B3), formerly the property of Charles Beecher Hogan and mentioned in my report for 1966, reappeared in the Ian Hodgkins catalogue 97 at the same price of £3,750.

Collected editions

A complete set of all five first editions (Gilson A1, A3, A7, A8 and A9) was offered by Simon Finch at the Antiquarian Book Fair in June for £37,000. These were in a uniform full red crushed morocco binding by Riviere. The same set was item 2 in Finch's catalogue 30 but was marked as sold, so perhaps we may assume the advertised price was realised. Jarndyce, in catalogue 120, item 37 had a set of the Standard Novels editions of 1833 (Gilson D1-5) for £2,000 in plain contemporary half calf.

Other Material

On 25 March the London firm of medal specialists, Dix, Noonan and Webb, put up for auction the medals and insignia awarded to Admiral Sir Francis Austen at an estimate of £25,000-£30,000. These were previously sold at Sotheby's on 28 June 1990, lot 287, for £27,000. *The Times* optimistically predicted a hammer price of £35,000 but they failed to sell.

CHRISTINE PENNEY

Was Jane Austen a snob?

Exactly forty-one years ago, in this very place, my father Harold Nicolson delivered a lecture to our Society in which he attempted to reconcile his lukewarm admiration for Jane Austen with the courtesy expected of him on an occasion like this. He was, after all, by nature and by training, a diplomat. If invited to be guest-of-honour at the annual dinner of the Society of Diamond Merchants, he would be unlikely to tell them that rubies are a girl's best friends. So in July 1956 he permitted himself to utter only an approximate version of what he really thought about Jane Austen. He made out that her letters reveal her in a more attractive light than her novels, when many of us would put it the other way round. He bequeathed to me his copy of Chapman's edition of the Letters, and I have noticed with amusement that his marginal comments tell a different story. 'Trivial', he scribbled; 'Genteel'; 'Prim'; 'Preoccupied with tiny social problems'; and then this: 'Her letters to Frank are even duller than those to Cassandra.' But in speaking to your predecessors here, he referred to Jane's 'maidenly sprightliness', and to her letters as 'natural and spontaneous'. 'So far from being trivial', he said, 'they are valuable social documents', and he criticised James Edward Austen-Leigh for 'bequeathing to posterity a portrait of his aunt as apple-cheeked and moon-faced', when if anyone did that it was Cassandra, by the libellous drawing she made of her sister which is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

Having, he thought, sufficiently praised Jane Austen for her letters, my father, who was not by nature a pugnacious man, felt at liberty to attack her novels. He spoke of 'the cynical and foolish figures she depicts in them', and went on, 'Her novels, it will be generally agreed, are almost inconceivably snobbish.' It was that phrase that brought me up short, and gave me a title for this lecture. What did he mean? That she described snobs? Or that she was one? Are we to regard her as approving of the cruel social system into which she was born, or as one of the first to protest against it?

I must steer a careful course between filial affection and denouncing my father's paradox. For paradox it was. How could the creator of Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Sir Walter Elliot, Mrs Norris and Mrs Elton have been a snob herself? Jane's disapproval of them is self-evident. It is true that the word 'snob' was unknown to her: it was first used in our modern sense by Thackeray. Lady Catherine would not have been called a snob by her contemporaries. They would have called her proud, or repeated Jane Austen's words, 'her air was not such as to make her visitors forget their inferior rank'. But if Jane had no single word to identify the type, she knew very well what it meant.

Let me first attempt a definition common to the 18th and 20th centuries. A snob – let us assume, charitably, that he is a man – is someone who wishes to impress other people with his importance, and regards birth, wealth, accent and possessions as evidence of superiority, irrespective of merit. His values are all wrong. He cannot praise his superiors without flattery, nor mock his inferiors without offence. He thinks he gets away with his snobbishness, but he never does. There is no type

more transparent than the snob. He is invariably a very foolish man, and his life is unhappy.

The difference between Jane Austen's day and our own is not that she approves of snobs while we disapprove, but that her social system was rigid, while ours is flexible. She took it for granted that people of working-class or lower-middle class origins would not attempt to enter her society. Everyone knew their place. The leisured aristocracy looked down on professional people, professional people on tradesmen, and tradesmen on the working class, not with contempt, but with self-satisfaction and with the assumption that God had ordained it that way. Social divisions were so wide and firmly drawn that only artists aspired to a higher class than that into which they were born, and, significantly, for the Austens, naval officers in wartime, which is why Sir Walter Elliot disapproved of them. Families who lived in large country-houses with countless servants thought themselves justly privileged, and Jane Austen felt no need to apologise for them. If a middle-class woman was thought unworthy of her class because she was poor, ugly or stupid, like Miss Bates, she did not forfeit her membership of it. But a decent hard-working youth like Robert Martin was thought by Emma (whom my father called 'that abominable Emma') to be highly unsuitable as a husband for her friend Harriet, for no other reason than that he was a tenant farmer.

To that extent, and to that extent only, I agree with my father. Jane Austen's novels are snobbish because they accept a structure of society that seems to us to defy every principle of humanity and justice. But don't let us condemn her for accepting it. What we consider snobbish now, was not snobbish then. To be a snob you must offend against current taste, not against some universal law. Two hundred years hence we will be thought snobbish because we have still not wholly discarded the codes and shibboleths of Jane's day. If asked to choose between a dull microbiologist and a dull duke as a dinner companion, I would choose the dull duke. If invited to Buckinghan Palace to share your golden wedding with the Queen, would you not leave the engraved invitation-card in the centre of your mantelpiece? Our attitudes are changing rapidly, and so they were at the turn of the 18th century, but Jane Austen does not appear, from her letters and novels, to have noticed the change, except perhaps in *Sanditon*. She was very conservative.

Did she, I wonder, have any concept of what we now call U and non-U? I think she did. She had no trouble with words like 'toilet', for she was too delicate even to mention it. Nowhere in the novels does she attempt to reproduce working-class or provincial speech, but there were certain class signals of which she was well aware. Lord Chesterfield draws our attention to some of them. You must never say *oblieged* for obliged, nor use vogue words like 'vastly' (vastly kind, vastly handsome), nor treat with familiarity people who are not your social or intellectual equals, like calling Dr Johnson 'Sam', or referring to the ancients as if you knew them personally, like speaking of 'that old rogue Horace'. There are equivalent solecisms in Jane Austen's novels, at least by implication. Though she could be pretty outspoken within her family, she believed that wider social intercourse demanded discretion and refinement. You must not talk scandal. In the presence

of women, men should never mention money, religion, politics or sex: certainly not sex. It is striking to find Marianne Dashwood, who was not noted for her reticence, replying to Sir John Middleton, when he teased her about 'setting her cap' at Willoughby, 'That is an expression, Sir John, which I particularly dislike. I abhor every common-place phrase by which wit is intended.' In polite society you must guard your tongue. The most important signals come not from the mouth but from the eyes. But this does not mean that you must stick to compliments and platitudes. Vulgarity and insolence are condemned, but so is unresponsiveness. The ideal, as Captain Wentworth puts it in *Persuasion*, is 'a strong mind with a sweetness of manner'. Worthwhile people must be articulate. They must be able to talk cleverly without impertinence, and sensibly without preaching. He was thinking of Anne Elliot, but he could also have been describing Elizabeth Bennet, or Jane Austen herself.

She had a very clear concept of a gentleman. When I joined the army in 1940, the colonel of my regiment told me that he expected his officers to behave like gentlemen, and when I enquired what that entailed, he replied that I must never carry a parcel in uniform, never reverse in waltzing, and never smoke Virginian cigarettes. Then he added a surprisingly clever definition of the word I'd queried: 'A gentleman is a man in whose presence a woman feels herself to be a lady'. That exactly describes Mr Knightley. He had excellent manners, but was never unctuous. He had no hesitation in scolding Emma, because she deserved a scolding and he loved her, while Mr Woodhouse and Miss Bates, who deserved a scolding far more, were spared.

His judgement of people was astute but never dismissive. He was kind. When he observed Harriet standing lonely at a dance, he engaged her as his partner. He was one of those men who know instinctively that to do the right thing is invariably the right thing to do. He is literature's supreme anti-snob.

Jane Austen knew that snobs take two forms, upwards and downwards. The upward snob like Mrs Elton, apes her superiors and snubs her equals. She assumes that strangers accept her high opinion of herself, but of course they don't. Her easy manner is too easy. She lays out all her cards too quickly. She takes short cuts to intimacy, shows off, drops names. She is the Regency equivalent of Hyacinth Bucket, and like Hyacinth, pecks at her poor husband. Whatever genuine feelings she may once have had have been obliterated by conceit, sentimentality and rich food. She fails to realise how ridiculous she appears to the very people whom she is anxious to impress. You might think that Mr Collins is another example of the type. But Mr Collins, surprisingly, is not a snob. He does not expect to be received at Rosings on equal terms. He is servile. He is absurd because he is obsequious, not because, like Mrs Elton, he is too grand.

The classic example of the snob who looks down is Mr Collins's patroness, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. She considers that the accident of birth and inherited wealth entitles her to be offensive to people who were not born with her advantages. She sustains her self-esteem by humiliating people who lack the courage to answer back, as Elizabeth Bennet does, in the strongest scene in all the novels, when she

refuses to be bullied by Lady Catherine into renouncing Darcy. But the meanest of the lot is Mrs Norris. She is worse than a snob: she is evil. Having no claim to superiority of any kind, she picks on Fanny Price as the only vulnerable person in Mansfield Park.

Jane Austen is very skilled at exploring the indignities suffered by outsiders, and how they triumph over them. Three of her heroines start weak and end strong – Anne Elliot, Catherine Morland and Fanny Price – and it could be said that all the Bennet girls were at a disadvantage because their father could not afford them dowries, and their mother was ridiculous. But, curiously, Jane's sympathies do not extend to the working class. Servants pullulate in all the novels, but we never get to know any of them. Only two — Darcy's housekeeper at Pemberley, and Thomas, the odd-job man in *Sense and Sensibility* – play any part in advancing the plot. All the other servants are dummies. We never hear of them getting ill, or falling in love, or being hired or dismissed, nor of their working conditions, their wages, their clothes, their downstairs gossip. So insignificant are they that their presence even on the most intimate family occasions can be safely ignored. When Fanny Price welcomes her brother William to Mansfield Park, she meets him alone, 'without witnesses, unless the servants chiefly intent upon opening the proper doors could be called such.' Why couldn't they be called such? Because they didn't count as real people. It is not Fanny speaking; it is Jane speaking. This is a good example of what my father meant by Jane Austen's snobbishness. But in the early 19th century even the servants did not resent their treatment. The attitude of a decent middle-class family like the Austens is best summed up in George Austen's advice to his son Francis when he was embarking on his naval career as a midshipman: 'With your inferiors [that presumably meant the common seamen] you will perhaps have little intercourse, and when it does occur, there is a sort of kindness they have a claim on you for.' 'A sort of kindness' was evidently the formula on dry land too, as when Mr Woodhouse speaks approvingly to Emma of Hannah, one of the maids at Hartfield, because she curtsied nicely.

There can be little doubt that Jane shared Fanny Price's distaste for poverty and ill-discipline. Although Steventon rectory must have been pretty disorderly with all those children, farm animals and students, it was neat and well-managed. It was a happy place. But in Fanny's parents' home at Portsmouth, the house was abominable for its smallness, shabbiness and noise, which the thin walls did nothing to exclude, day or night. Her brothers, apart from William, were ill-mannered, her father drunk, her mother without kindness. No wonder that Fanny longed for the 'elegance, propriety, regularity and harmony' of Mansfield Park. So would Jane. She was well aware of the seamier side of Regency England and knew that its elegance was a cloak for much that was brutal, cruel, coarse and lecherous. But she was a fastidious woman. She demanded a certain decorum. However I wonder whether she would really have enjoyed life at Mansfield Park, where there was nothing for the family to do, because everything was done for them. The ladies just sat around awaiting the attention of the men. Games, jokes and theatricals were frowned on because they were thought vulgar by Sir Thomas, who had 'a

fine, dignified manner', Jane assures us, 'but there was never much laughter in his presence'. Why, I wonder, did she disapprove so strongly of the Crawford siblings, who introduced some life into this morgue? I, for one, would infinitely have preferred to marry Mary Crawford rather than Fanny Price.

Let us remember that although England at the end of the 18th century was the wealthiest nation on earth, it was never more divided between rich and poor. Trevelyan has written, 'At no period had the landed gentry been happier, or more engrossed in the life of their pleasant country-house.' Their pastoral world had never seemed more secure than in the middle of a terrible war in which they took little part. Nobody seems to have questioned why healthy young men like Tom Bertram, William Elliot or, for that matter, Mr Darcy himself, felt no shame in shirking their patriotic duty. Nor were they in the least concerned that country people were seeping into the towns, and, in town or country, enduring conditions which Cobbett described as more miserable than those of the peasantry of Spain.

The Austens were both below and above all this. They were middle-class people. Let us not call them upper-middle or lower-middle. They were middle-middle. George Austen was rector of Steventon, but also to some extent its squire. Although they were not well off, they had a number of rich relations, from whom George was not too proud to borrow, and because they were an exceptionally attractive family who enlivened any party, they were invited to houses far above their station, like Hackwood, Hurstbourne Park and Laverstoke, but to dances and garden-parties only, not to intimate dinner-parties, and their hosts did not expect to be asked to dine at the rectory in return. So Jane Austen was well-placed to view society upwards and downwards. The only types she missed were the topmost aristocracy, and foreigners. (Not a single foreigner makes an appearance in her novels, not even a Scotsman.) She met villagers on terms not intimidating to them, and mixed with the gentry without awe or awkwardness. She had no wish to move into a more brilliant society. It meant nothing to her that her mother's grandfather was brother-in-law to a duke. From her childhood onwards she mocked genealogies. In *Love and Freindship*, which she is believed to have written when she was only 14, the two young men, Philander and Gustavus, tell Laura:

> 'Our mothers could neither of them exactly ascertain who were our fathers, though it is generally believed that Philander is the son of one Philip Jones, a bricklayer, and that my father was Gregory Staves, a staymaker of Edinburgh. This is, however, of little consequence, for as our mothers were certainly never married, it reflects no dishonour on our blood, which is of an ancient and unpolluted kind.'

Jane refused to meet the noble French émigrés at Juniper Hall. She had little conception of an élite, which is the product of individual gifts and efforts, as opposed to an aristocracy, which is a matter of chance. The Prince Regent's invitation to dedicate her next novel to him was one more of astonishment than delight. In her letters there are no descriptions of the grand houses where she danced. Like Sotherton, they have rooms 'each handsome in its way', but that's about all. She seemed indifferent to their architecture or works-of-art. She was not

easily impressed. She never dropped a name. She referred to Lord and Lady Bolton of Hackwood as 'the Boltons' and refused to dance with their eldest son and heir because he danced so badly. Her brother's friends in Kent represented the highest social and intellectual level to which she aspired, baronets not dukes, Members of Parliament not Cabinet Ministers, 5,000 acres not 20,000 – Godmersham, in fact, not Pemberley. Chawton Cottage, which is a little more than a cottage, and Chawton House, which is a little less than Chatsworth, illustrate her range. And if further proof is needed that she did not idolise the aristocracy, consider her fictional aristocrats. Scarcely one of them emerges with credit. They are either debauched and evil like Lady Susan, self-important like Lady Catherine, indolent like Lady Bertram or absurdly pompous like Sir Walter Elliot. The people whom she wishes us to admire are from her own class. All eight of her heroines (for let us not forget Charlotte of *Sanditon* and Emma Watson) are girls whom she could have known and liked. So are the couples she favours, like Admiral and Mrs Croft, the Gardiners, the Westons. From the way they talk and behave we get an idea of the conduct she most valued herself, and this is reflected in her letters. She was shocked that a neighbour could darn a pair of stockings throughout a social visit but did not mind when her own mother carried on sewing on a similar occasion. But darning was lower-middle class, sewing middle-middle. Such were the social niceties of which Jane Austen was acutely aware, and to which she subconsciously subscribed.

She seems to have been unconcerned by the problem of shifting class-distinctions, for in her day they scarcely shifted. Let me read you an extract from *Barchester Towers*, written only forty years after Jane's death, to illustrate a social dilemma which her contemporaries never had to face. Miss Thorne is giving a garden-party:

> ...there was a dreadful line to be drawn. Who were to dispose themselves within the ha-ha, and who without? To this the unthinking will give an off-hand answer,.. Oh, the bishop and such like within the ha-ha; and Farmer Greenacre and such like without. True, my unthinking friend; but who shall define these such-likes? It is in such definitions that the whole difficulty of Society consists. To seat the bishop on an armchair on the lawn and place Farmer Greenacre at the end of a long table in the Paddock is easy enough; but where will you put Mrs Lookaloft, whose husband, though a tenant on the estate, hunts in a red coat, whose daughters go to a fashionable seminary in Barchester, who calls her farmhouse Rosebank, and who has a pianoforte in her drawing room? ...And yet Mrs Lookaloft is no fit companion and never has been the associate of the Thornes and the Grantleys... Mrs Greenacre is at present well contented with the paddock, but she might cease to be so if she saw Mrs Lookaloft on the lawn. (Chapter xxxv)

Trollope was amused by such social awkwardnesses, but Jane Austen never examines them because in her day they did not exist. You cannot imagine Mr Darcy consenting to dance with Miss Greenacre at a village hop, but a young Mr Thorne would be keen to. In 1800 the Lookalofts would not have had a daughter at a fashionable school, and if Mr Lookaloft hunted he would have worn a duffle,

not a red, coat. It would never have occurred to him or his wife to mingle with the bishop or suchlike on the lawn. If the problem had arisen, you can be sure that Jane Austen would have had as much fun with it as did Anthony Trollope, but it never seemed to her likely to arise. This confirms my thesis, that Jane was no revolutionary. She accepted the conventions of her time, ridiculed their absurdities, but had no wish to change them.

None of the Austens engaged in trade, but they did not despise it, like Caroline Bingley and her awful sister Mrs Hurst, who conveniently overlooked the fact that their brother's fortune had been acquired by this means. Nowhere does Jane picture merchants fawning on the aristocacy, for they had no need to, and we see how naturally Mr Darcy takes to the Gardiners. She sympathises with small incomes. She does not pity Emma Watson for having to do the washing-up, or eating her evening meal at 3 pm off a tray. It is 'dinner' at Osborne Castle at 7 that excites her ridicule. In *Sanditon* Mr Parker, who is laying out a seaside resort as a speculation, is treated with sympathy. Jane Austen likes these people, admires them, but she can still insist that they must know and keep their place. When she wrote to her niece Anna about an episode in one of Anna's novels 'A country surgeon would not be introduced to men of their rank', she was neither deploring nor approving the distinction, but simply reminding Anna of its existence, which to her mind was probably immutable.

The touchstone, of course, was marriage. She did not complain of the subordination of women. She expected a man like Sir Thomas Bertram to be master in his own house, and made no protest against the part of the marriage service which she must often have heard, when the bridegroom says, 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow', meaning exactly the opposite, that the bride's property has just become his. But *Mansfield Park* is in a sense a feminist novel because it argues that men choose their wives for the wrong reasons – their birth, wealth and beauty – when what count are sense, talent, grace and mettle. Yes, mettle, the quality that Winston Churchill once defined as the most estimable in a man or woman. A personality, he thought, and so did Jane, must be slightly barbed. It was latent even in the timid Fanny Price. Yet Jane was the last person to pretend that money was unimportant. She could easily have rewritten the first sentence of *Pride and Prejudice* to read, 'A single man in want of a wife must be in possession of a good fortune.' She would not go so far as Squire Weston in *Tom Jones* who declared that he 'had no more apprehension of his daughter falling in love with a poor man than with an animal of a different species', but she acknowledged again and again that money counted: without it, she suggests, you cannot live a full, even a decent, life, and by money she meant not great riches, but a sufficiency, like the £600 a year to which the Austens were reduced when they moved to Chawton. But more important than money was love. 'Anything is to be preferred or endured rather than marrying without affection,' she told her niece Fanny Knight. Lucy Steele is contemptible because she jilts a poor but decent man for a rich and worthless one. Elizabeth Bennet never gets over her astonishment that Charlotte Lucas could have accepted Mr Collins without loving him, and perhaps because she imagined the horror of

honeymoon nights with so odious a man. Jane never regretted remaining single herself. She practised what she preached. Having accepted Harris Bigg-Wither, the heir to a fine estate, she changed her mind next morning, because she could not love him.

Her novels are didactic. They are the most delectable sermons ever preached. They define good and evil in human nature more subtly than any novelist had yet attempted. Excellence and depravity, she thought, are innate, and one aspect of depravity is cruelty to your inferiors in birth – or in the one word that she never used, snobbishness. I know of no clearer statement of her attitude than a passage in *Persuasion*, and let me end with it. William Elliot is trying to persuade his cousin Anne to suck up to Lady Dalrymple and her awful daughter. Anne refuses. When Elliot persists, saying that 'as rank is rank, your being known to be related to them will have its use in fixing your family in that degree of consideration which we must all wish for', she replies, 'It does vex me, that we should be so solicitous to have the relationship acknowledged, which we may be very sure is a matter of perfect indifference to them. ...I am too proud, to enjoy a welcome that depends so entirely upon place.'

There, I feel sure, Anne Elliot speaks for Jane Austen. What matters to both is character, not rank. Rank confers status. It does not confer merit. What Virginia Woolf called 'Jane Austen's exquisite discrimination of human values' is evident throughout her life and novels. Yes, my father was right in one sense: of course she could be called a snob, but by our standards, not hers. Two hundred years ago everyone was convinced that social ranking guaranteed social stability. To disturb it invited revolution. What Jane valued was sense and sensibility, the sense of not upsetting the accepted order of society, and the sensibility to mock its faults and sympathise with its victims.

NIGEL NICOLSON

The Jane Austen Society



Mr Thomas Knight of Godmersham

Report for 1998

The Jane Austen Society

Founded in 1940 by Miss Dorothy Darnell
Registered Charity No. 1040613

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Hon. Secretary Susan McCartan, Carton House, Redwood Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5PE (telephone 01420 562469)

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Membership Secretary and database Rosemary Culley, 22 Belmont Grove, Havant PO9 3PU (e.mail rosemary @ sndc.demon.co.uk)

Accountants to the Society Messrs Sheen Stickland & Co, Alton

Contributions to the Report are welcome. They should be not more than 2,600 words, and should be based on original research into the life and times of Jane Austen, her family and friends, or places known to her.

Editor David Selwyn Assistant editor Jill Gandy

Articles to be considered for publication in the Report should be sent to 8 Barrow Court, Barrow Gurney, Bristol BS48 3RW.

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Front cover: Miniature of Thomas Knight of Godmersham by Christian Friedrich Zincke (1683/4 - 1767). See p. 8.

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From the Chairman

1998 marks the last full year in office of the Society's first elected Committee. It gives us the opportunity to judge how effectively our new Constitution has been operating and the value of possessing Charitable status. Those who feared that the processes of democracy and regularisation would in some way change or detract from the Society can be reassured. In its essence, the Society is unchanged. Regularisation has not brought regulation, nor has Charitable status brought bureaucracy.

The Society remains what it has always been, a gathering-ground for those with a shared love of Jane Austen and her works. And it remains a Society in which the members' wishes and interests come first. The proof of this is visible in the growing numbers at the AGM, not only for the high point, the afternoon address, but also at the morning session of Society business. The proof is also visible in the growing level of branch and group activities and in the events sponsored by the Committee.

Looking forward to the next five years, we would welcome a regular inflow of younger members, with their energy and ideas, and the continuing support of our members worldwide.

Brian Southam
April 1999

Knight family portraits

David Gilson

In her article on Chawton Great House in the 1940s in last year's *Report* Elizabeth Jenkins recalled seeing in the library two full-length portraits of Edward and Elizabeth Knight; Brian Southam wondered if the portrait of Edward Knight was the one now hanging at Chawton Cottage (see *Report for 1997*, p.9).

There were at Chawton House two large portraits, not full length (more three-quarter length), both of them reproduced in the book *Chawton Manor and its owners* by William Austen-Leigh and Montagu George Knight, 1911 (frontispiece and facing p.149), and both there ascribed to George Romney; but these portraits represent *not* Edward and Elizabeth Knight but Thomas Knight (1735 -1794) and his wife Catherine, born Knatchbull. The portrait of Edward Knight on the Grand Tour is quite another matter.

Both these portraits were on show at the Jane Austen exhibition at Olympia in 1994.

The Annual General Meeting

The President, Richard Knight, welcomed about 400 members to the morning business session. The Chairman conveyed good wishes from Miss Elizabeth Jenkins, and reported that Mr Nigel Nicolson had accepted an invitation to become a Vice President. Condolences were expressed to Lady Coulson, of the Memorial Trust, upon the death of Sir John Coulson. Two major biographies had been published, and consideration was being given to the registration of a trademark to protect Jane Austen's name. There had been a full and free exchange of ideas with the President of JASNA and with the Jane Austen Memorial Trust. Good relations had been maintained with representatives of Chawton House Library. Progress continued towards the restoration of the Revd George Austen's tombstone at St Swithin's Church, Bath. Members were invited to offer their professional skills at the elections in 1999. The Honorary Secretary reported a year of steady growth: 239 new members had enrolled including 48 from overseas, and 10 new life members had been welcomed. With 13 resignations and 12 members claimed by mortality, total membership stood at 1992. The branches and groups had been active and their events were recorded in the *Report*. A residential weekend conference was planned for September 1999 at Wye College, Kent. Millennium plans included an international conference in Bermuda to mark the island's links with Jane Austen's sailor brothers, and celebratory events at home were under consideration. The Honorary Treasurer reported the Society in good financial standing.

The proposed acquisition fund would allow £2000 from existing funds to be earmarked for the purchase of modest items of memorabilia costing up to £1000 each. A specialist pre-auction information service could supply weekly information, the annual subscription being £400. Acquisitions would be offered for display at the museum at Chawton. The proposal was carried unanimously. A large gathering of members and guests was welcomed by the President in the afternoon and the JASNA visitors were thanked for their gifts of floral decorations. Restoration of Chawton House had begun and the American Librarian conducted a spectral Jane Austen around the collection. The Chairman outlined the morning's business, and made a farewell presentation to Anthony Tilke. The address was given by Baroness James, who delivered a masterly analysis of *Emma*. Maggie Lane proposed the vote of thanks. The stewardship of members of the Southern Circle was much appreciated. An overflowing congregation attended the 18th July Commemorative Evensong, which was addressed by the Revd Michael Kenning.

Branches and Groups

Bath and Bristol

In reviewing the year's events, I see that the first three were variations on a theme, though the programme was not designed with that in view – it just happened! The year began with our now customary early January Cassandra's Tea Party at 4

Sydney Place. Before the light went, Michael Davis showed us the work that had been done to give the back garden an eighteenth century structure. In May our AGM was held at Prior Park, where our guest speaker, the architectural historian Isabel Allen, gave an illustrated talk on the spaces, indoors and out, of Regency architecture, and how these are deployed to great effect in Jane Austen's novels. The theme continued with a strawberry tea afternoon, held this year at Barrow Court just outside Bristol, where discussion of our chosen novel *Northanger Abbey* combined with enjoyment of the splendid architectural gardens. The fourth event of the year could hardly have formed a greater contrast, however, as a small group of us met in Bristol Grammar School Library to discover 'Jane Austen on the Internet' under the expert guidance of Louise Ross. Laughter and learning enlivened the November afternoon.

Maggie Lane

Birmingham

In the Library Theatre, Birmingham on 14 November, approximately one hundred people enjoyed two excellent lectures and a unique presentation of two Austenian dialogues.

In a thoroughly researched presentation given with great style and enthusiasm, Chris Viveash talked on Jane Austen and the Theatre. He richly illustrated the extent to which Jane Austen's experience of the theatre influenced her writing. He detailed the Austen family's own theatricals in the barn at Steventon, especially those that took place in 1787 when Eliza de Feuillide visited the family. Deirdre Le Faye talked to us about Jane's correspondence, which has been dismissed by some as showing 'No opinions, no transcripts of her mind – only details of domestic life ... .' As Deirdre pointed out, however, in an age without modern media, letters were the means of imparting news about domestic affairs, business matters, and gossip. There are still fourteen of Jane Austen's known letters which currently cannot be traced. Deirdre Le Faye would like to know if anyone has knowledge of their whereabouts.

After lunch we enjoyed a world premiere of two Austenian dialogues on the subject of eighteenth-century child-rearing techniques. Deirdre Le Faye discovered these in the course of her research and thinks that, although not written in her hand, they could be attributed to Jane Austen. She explained the context and content before directing the performance by three talented students from the English/Drama department of Birmingham University.

Julie Shorland

Cambridge

The group started with five members in November 1997 and now has a membership of 24. P. D. James has kindly agreed to become our Patron, an honour of which members are deeply sensible.

On 27 January there was an evening of readings at Carole Ryder's house

— favourite passage and/or most grating character. Margaret Hammond, a member, gave a talk on 15 April on the Rice Portrait; she has studied this picture for over 25 years and is a passionate advocate of its authenticity. A lively discussion followed her paper, aided not least by the presence of Henry Rice, himself a new member. Six members of the group attended the Society's AGM in July and a Cambridge stand appeared at Chawton for the first time. A small part of Hazel Mills' Austen library excited great interest among the bibliophiles and 60 bookmarks she had embroidered (6 designs, each based on one of the novels) made a most attractive show. Valerie Grosvenor Myer gave a talk on 30 September, 'The hidden autobiography in Jane Austen's novels'; her thesis was that the novels are far more autobiographical than is generally realized.

Audrey Stenner

Hampshire

In the Spring of 1997, our meeting was held at Rotherfield Park, near Alton, by kind permission of Sir James and Lady Scott. The picturesque house provided a suitable setting for Nigel Nicolson's talk 'Jane Austen and Love'. At tea, cakes made from period recipes were sampled. Spectacular views from the terrace formed the first part of the garden tour, which was much enjoyed. On June 28, in partnership with the Jane Austen Memorial Trust, members of the Hampshire and Southern Circle groups hosted a farewell tea for the JASNA visitors at Chawton. This was followed by a performance of 'My solitary Elegance' given by Judith French.

Our 1998 Spring meeting, held once more at Alton Abbey, was led by Dom Nicholas Seymour OSB, who gave a stimulating exposition on *Sanditon*. This vigorous satire on invalidism contrasted sharply with Jane Austen's own declining health. The speed and energy of her writing, her characters imbued with some incongruities of temperament already encountered in the Juvenilia, signalled her conviction that she was writing against time. An interesting discussion followed by tea and a stroll in the gardens completed another successful meeting.

Susan McCartan

Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight group has had meetings every two months throughout 1998. Attendance was low, with an average of six. However, in November we were delighted to welcome more new members. We now have twenty-nine persons on our mailing list. They are being encouraged to join the main Society.

We had lively discussions on the novels. At the May meeting, we watched video presentations of parts of the films, and various adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice,* to consider the various ways producers had treated the wonderful conversations in this novel. As this was a very popular programme, we decided to adopt other themes from the novels for our study day.

Seven of us were able to attend the AGM at Chawton; a most enjoyable day. At the November meeting, there was a stimulating discussion on *Mansfield Park,* before the necessary basic forward planning for 1999. Several of us are hoping to

attend some of the Jane Austen study days at Alton Abbey next summer.

Elizabeth Dennis

Kent

1998 was a successful year. We now have 90 members. Our annual dinner was held at Wye College. Owing to the departure of the leaseholder at Godmersham, the house is not available for our use. However we did have a successful AGM, with Claire Tomalin as speaker and a visit by the Windsor Box & Fir Company for a concert of period music, at Godmersham in June. For this event we offered half-day tickets for local people including Stourbridge Music Club, and we will extend this idea.

Our discussion group has met twice, and is proving popular with young and old.

Audrey Cockshutt

London

In June, twenty members of the group did a walk from the site of Henry Austen's house in Hans Place near Sloane Square to Albany, Piccadilly, where once Henry had his office. The walk was led by Jill Manasseh, who supplied a great deal of information about places mentioned in Jane Austen's novels and letters. In Albany Alethea Lyall kindly entertained us in her home, where we had a strawberry tea. Our Patron, Park Honan, gave an extremely interesting talk on 'Jane Austen and Creativity', with special reference to *Sanditon*, on 26 September, in the Durning-Lawrence Library of the University of London. A number of us went to the Day Conference organised by the Jane Austen Society at the Centre for English Studies on 7 November. On 4 November, our sixth Annual Dinner at the New Cavendish Club in Great Cumberland Place was the usual happy occasion. Brian Southam again gave an entertaining and instructive talk. This year the readings from the novels concentrated on some of the more unpleasant characters at their worst.

Newsletters containing articles of general interest were sent to group members in April and October.

Allan Wilkinson

Midlands

Our main theme for the year was Jane Austen's Juvenilia, and opened with our AGM on 21 March at Keele University. Members and others enjoyed lectures from Joy Minnis, Penelope Hughes-Hallett, Dr Heidi Kaye and Anne Kiggell. The topics ranged from the Juvenilia through Steventon, childhood and amateur theatricals. For our summer event, the strawberry tea, we visited Lyme Park – Pemberley in the latest production of *Pride and Prejudice*.

In the autumn we held a study weekend at Keele, again with a varied programme of lectures. On the Saturday Gaye King talked about Edward Cooper, David Selwyn on Jane Austen's poetry and Chris Viveash on Jane Austen and the theatre. Mary

Bonwick started the Sunday programme examining Jane Austen's spinster existence through the letters, and Bill Hutchings explored the mature comedy of the Juvenilia. Lunch was followed by a visit to Buxton. Our year closed with the Jane Austen birthday dinner at Weston Hall, a reputedly haunted seventeenth-century building, where an excellent meal was followed by eighteenth-century music played by the Liebeck String Quartet - and no sign of ghosts.

Dawn Thomas

Norfolk

After several rehearsals during August we made our way to the King of Hearts, Fye Bridge, Norwich, to present our anthology, 'Proposals and Misunderstandings', which used excerpts from *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. (Copies of this anthology, compiled by Hilda Wells, are available if any other Branch would like to use it.) Our work was well received by the small audience of forty. We were sufficiently encouraged to plan another similar evening for the spring. Part of our encouragement stems from the fact that our youngest reader was thirteen, and our oldest seventy-one! Jane Austen is certainly a writer for all ages of men and women. Gill Tichborne was our guest soloist; her rendering of 'My mother bids me bind my hair' was particularly well received.

On 10 December we reassembled for our pre-Christmas party. Philippa Long won the Jane Austen Quiz with ease (as we knew she would). We observed how difficult it is to remember the fairly rare mention of colours in Jane Austen's works.

Hilda Wells

Oxford

The Oxford branch held its annual Study Day in October, at St Anne's College, Oxford. While members were sorry not to visit St Hilda's College with its river views, as in previous years, all present were very impressed by St Anne's hospitality. Once again members were able to enjoy not only the ideas presented by the speakers, but also the chance to exchange news with fellow members of the Society over an excellent lunch. In the morning session Dom Nicholas Seymour OSB from Alton Abbey, gave a fascinating and penetrating insight into Jane Austen's Spirituality, which gave rise to a wide-ranging discussion. After lunch members benefited from the erudition of Anne Kiggell, who spoke about Jane Austen's View of Childhood. Members were disappointed to hear that Mrs Helen Ghosh and Dr Anne-Marie Drummond were prevented by heavy work and domestic commitments from continuing in their role as organisers of Branch activities, which they have undertaken since the inception of this Branch. It is hoped that other members of the branch will step forward to carry on the tradition of the annual Study Day.

Anne-Marie Drummond

Southern Circle

In the past year we had our usual two meetings – the first in March, the second in November – at which we discussed informally the subject of Jane Austen's poetry and *The Watsons* respectively.

We met up for lunch and stewardship at the AGM in July, as usual. I took over from Bill Ramsay as Secretary at the November meeting to give Bill more time to devote to his many other commitments, including those of the main Society committee. On behalf of all members of the Southern Circle, I would like to thank Bill for the time and energy he put into the meetings. We look forward to seeing him again as a 'normal' member of our group.

Fiona Ainsworth

Zincke miniature purchased for the Society

Deirdre Le Faye

In accordance with the decision taken at the last AGM of the Society, that an Acquisitions Sub-Committee be authorised to purchase Austenian memorabilia as and when such items appeared for sale, it is with pleasure that the Sub-Committee can now report its first purchase.

On 14th October 1998 Messrs Christie's held a sale of Important Portrait Miniatures, most of which came from the very fine collection amassed during the 1950s by Mr and Mrs Walter A. Rappolt. In this sale Lot 13 was a miniature by Christian Friedrich Zincke of the first Mr Thomas Knight of Godmersham, and the Society was able to acquire it for £1,000 (including commission and VAT). The miniature is now at Jane Austen's House, and will be displayed in the case containing other Austen family miniatures. It is enamel on copper, oval in shape, 46 mm high, in a silver-gilt frame with reeded border, the reverse engraved with the coat-of-arms of May quartering Brodnax, and shows Mr Knight facing left in a bright blue velvet coat and lace cravat, wearing a full-bottomed powdered wig. The miniature is not dated, but another miniature in the same sale - Lot 11, unknown young gentleman, by Noah Seaman - is dated 1734, and the clothes and wig of that sitter are identical in style to those of Mr Knight. The fact that the coat-of-arms upon the reverse shows only those of May and Brodnax, suggests also that the miniature pre-dates the change of name to Knight.[1]

The earliest miniatures were painted in watercolour on vellum, a method adopted from the practice of the artists who illuminated manuscripts. The main alternative medium was fired enamel, which was introduced into England from the Continent in the 1680s. The technique of firing enamel was slow, painstaking and prone to irreparable faults during firing. All the colours were based on solid silica materials (obtained from glass) with metal oxide pigments. These were

applied to a white ground, fired on to copper, and each colour needed to be fired separately, leaving ample opportunities for blemishes and cracks. The benefits of such a slow process, when it was applied with skill, were brilliant and permanent colours, in contrast to the fragility of watercolour on either vellum or ivory. Since enamel painting is a ceramic process akin to the decoration of porcelain, it encouraged the use of strong colours and a technique of modelling with little points of pigment. Christian Friedrich Zincke (1683/4-1767) trained in Dresden as a goldsmith and came to London to assist the miniaturist Charles Boit, learning the technique of enamelling from him. Zincke took over Boit's workshop in 1714, and painted enamel miniatures from life and also copied from oil portraits; he had a very distinguished clientele, including royal patronage – George II made him his Painter in Enamel in 1732 – and was undoubtedly one of the greatest enamellists of the eighteenth century. His eyesight gradually failed and by the 1740s he was producing relatively few works.[2]

Mr Thomas Knight (1701-80) was the son of Colonel William Brodnax and his wife Anne May – hence the coat-of-arms on his miniature. In 1727 he changed his name to May in order to inherit property from his mother's family, and then again changed his name to Knight in 1738 when he inherited the Hampshire estates of Chawton and Steventon from his kinswoman Elizabeth Knight. In 1732 he built Godmersham Park in Kent, which was in due course inherited by his son Thomas Knight II and from him passed to Edward Austen. Mr Thomas Brodnax May Knight was not himself any blood relation to the Steventon Austens, but can be considered as their original fairy godfather, for it was his marriage in 1729 to Jane Monke which brought the Austen family to his notice. Jane Monke (1710-65) was a second cousin of the Revd George Austen (1731-1805), and although this relationship may seem rather distant it only serves to illustrate the close family ties maintained amongst the Kentish Austens. Mr Knight, by reason of his inheritance of the Steventon estate, had the right of presentation to the living; and so, when the rectory of Steventon fell vacant in 1761, Mrs Knight evidently reminded her husband that she had a deserving young clerical cousin at St John's College in Oxford, who needed to acquire a living before he could hope to get married. Thus it was that George Austen moved away from the main family of Austens in the Tonbridge area and settled in Hampshire instead – giving Steventon the honour of being Jane Austen's birthplace.

Notes

1. See William Austen-Leigh & Montagu G. Knight, *Chawton Manor and its Owners, a Family History* (London, 1911), for a three-quarter portrait of Mr Thomas Knight by D'Algh, facing page 145 – apparently undated, but perhaps a little later than this miniature. Drawings of the arms of May (gules, a fess between eight billets or), of Brodnax (or, two chevrons gules; on a chief of the second three cinquefoils argent) and of Knight (vert, a bend lozengy or, in base a cinquefoil argent), are given on pp. 133, 139 and 145 respectively.
2. See: English Heritage, *Miniatures at Kenwood, the Draper Gift* (London 1997), pp. 8, 12-13, 42; and also Daphne Foskett, *A Dictionary of British Miniature Painters* (London

Silhouettes of the Revd William Knight and his family

Deirdre Le Faye

Thanks to the kindness of Mr Harold Ward, of Grantham, Lincs., the Society has been given glazed and framed copies of seven life-size silhouettes, the likenesses of Jane's nephew William Knight and six of his children. The silhouettes are presently stored at Jane Austen's House, and it is hoped that they, or possibly smaller photographs of them, can be displayed in due course.

Silhouettes were first popularised by the Swiss theologian and poet Johann Kaspar Lavater, who used them to illustrate his theories on physiognomy, and his book on the subject, *Physiognomische Fragmente,* became a best-seller in Britain following its translation and publication here in 1793. Lavater explained the simple mechanical process for taking silhouette portraits: a patent chair was used in order to hold the subject absolutely still while the profile was traced, and a candle cast a shadow onto a sheet of tracing paper which was placed behind a vertical glass. The artist simply traced the profile life-size onto the paper, and then the full-size profile was reduced, using a pantograph, to the requisite miniature size. The silhouettes were cut two at a time and blackened with black paint or ink; one was then framed and a replica stuck into the family album. Full-sized profiles, which have not been reduced by means of the pantograph, are very rare survivals compared to the usual miniature size of about two inches in height.[1]

William Knight was the fourth son of Edward Knight, and the first of his children actually to be born at Godmersham. Mr and Mrs George Austen, with Jane and Cassandra, were staying at Godmersham in the autumn of 1798, and were present for William's birth on 10th October; thereafter, Cassandra stayed on to help nurse Elizabeth and the new baby, while the Austen parents and Jane returned to Steventon. Some generalised early references to William occur in Jane's letters at the end of 1798, but he is first mentioned by her as an individual in the summer of 1805, when she tells Cassandra that she has been 'playing at Battledore & Shuttlecock with William; he & I have practised together two mornings, & improve a little; we have frequently kept it up *three* times, & once or twice *six*.' In the winter of 1809 he had some nursery ailment, during which he occupied himself by working a footstool in cross-stitch as a gift for his Grandmama Austen at Chawton – Jane guessed that he would have chosen greens and purples for the colour scheme. After that, we learn from her letters that he has followed in his elder brothers' steps to a prep school at Eltham, and then to Winchester; that he went to France in 1816 on a trip with his uncle Henry Austen; and returned in time to visit Chawton and Steventon in the spring of 1817 and to be one of Jane's escorts on her last sad journey to Winchester in May 1817.[2]

William again followed his elder brothers to Oxford, and took his degree at Exeter College, after which he was ordained in June 1823. He then went to stay for a few months with his eldest sister, Fanny - by now Lady Knatchbull - at her

married home of Mersham le Hatch in Kent, and to the annoyance of Fanny and her very proper husband Sir Edward Knatchbull, 'formed an attachment' to the governess in the Mersham household, a Miss Atkinson – 'tall – very well looking – without being handsome ... her manner – good and Ladylike'. Unfortunately, as soon as the 'attachment' was revealed, Miss Atkinson was instantly dismissed, and William evidently did not dare offend his family by maintaining his attachment and marrying her.[3] Instead he went to the family living of Steventon, where he was first curate, under his uncle Henry Austen, and then succeeded him as rector later in 1823. He never moved away, but remained rector for the next fifty years, until his death on 5th December 1873.



William Knight (1798-1878), artist unknown, c. 1845

Once at Steventon, William soon consoled himself by marrying a neighbour, Caroline Portal, eldest daughter of John Portal of Freefolk Priors, Hampshire, in 1825, and by her had eight children. One, Emily, lived for only a week in 1832, and the silhouettes given by Mr. Ward show six of the remaining seven children. Their names and brief details, are as follows:

Elizabeth-Caroline, later Mrs Harrisson (1826-1927)
Gertrude, unmarried (1827-1916)
Frederic-William (1828-1902); his silhouette is missing from the group
Edward-Bridges (1829-1878)
Richard (1831-1866)
Emily (1832); no silhouette
Arthur-Charles (1833-1905)
Frances-Louisa, later Mrs Parker (1837-1911)

William's wife Caroline died five weeks after the birth of her last child, and some three years later he married Mary Northey, a daughter of the Revd Edward Northey, Canon of Windsor. By her he had another three little girls – Mary-Agnes, Cecilia, and Augusta – who all tragically died of scarlet fever within days of each other, in

June 1848. Mary Northey died in 1854 and William subsequently married a third time, the widowed Lady Jane Hope, but had no more children.

The silhouettes are undated, but are annotated on the back with the names and dates of the sitters; as Frances-Louisa, the youngest of the family, is already clearly beyond babyhood, it would suggest that the silhouettes were taken circa 1840. Frederic-William's portrait may be missing either because he was away at school at the time, or because it chanced not to survive along with the others. It may perhaps have been William's second wife Mary who took these silhouettes soon after her marriage, as an occupation for herself and her step-children in the long evenings at Steventon. The fact that the death-dates of the sitters are given shows that the silhouettes remained in family hands until at least 1927, when Elizabeth-Caroline died at the great age of 101 on 16th January. It is not known what happened to them thereafter; Mr Ward bought them from a dealer in Bristol who had no knowledge of their previous history. It is a most lucky chance that this very unusual group of seven large silhouettes should all survive together, and the Society is most grateful to Mr Ward for his kindness in donating such excellent copies.

Notes

1. Kevin McSwiggan, *Silhouettes* (Shire Album No. 335, Shire Publications Ltd, Princes Risborough, 1997). The Revd William Knight is shown on p. 5.
2. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (OUP, 1995), pp. 17, 20, 24, 41, 48, 107, 128, 163, 165, 196, 205, 207, 215, 238, 265, 317, 342.
3. Margaret Wilson, *Almost Another Sister: the story of Fanny Knight, Jane Austen's Favourite Niece* (George Mann Books, Maidstone, 1998), pp. 19, 92, 94, 104, 123-24, 132, 134, 138.

Jane Austen and her brother Henry's bank failure 1815-16

T.A.B. Corley

Henry Austen was Jane's favourite brother. Handsome, witty, a good conversationalist with an unusually optimistic and resilient nature, he was brisk, businesslike and experienced in finance. He successfully negotiated on her behalf with publishers over her novels. In turn, she attended at his wife Eliza's deathbed in April 1813 and returned a month later to help with settling her affairs.[1] She relished the opportunity to stay with him, in his succession of well-appointed London residences, to conduct her author's business and to enjoy a change of scene.[2]

When, in the summer of 1814, Henry moved to 23 Hans Place, Chelsea, she was the first in the family to visit him. Perhaps as an in-joke, she wrote to

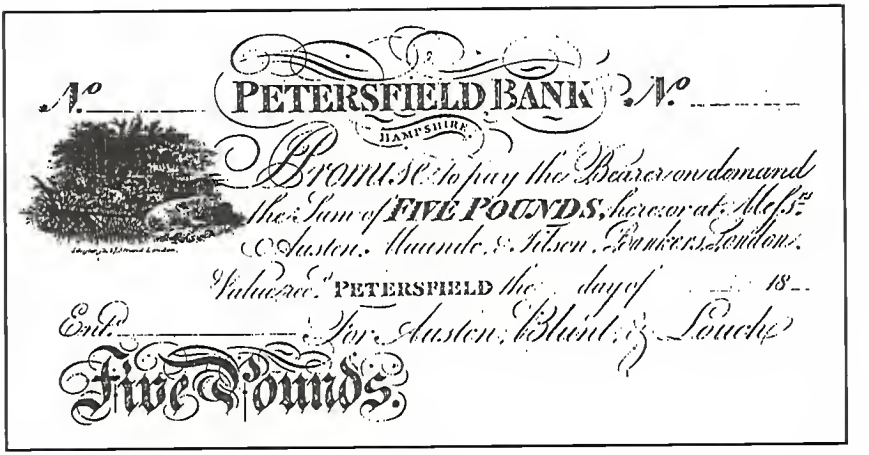
Cassandra about her bedroom in the 'front Attic'; in fact, the top storey contained two servants' rooms, for a 'very creditable cleanlooking' maid and for Richard the manservant.[3] According to an inventory of the house taken in 1816,[4] hers was probably the comfortably furnished room on the second floor, its double bed covered with a needlework counterpane. On the Kidderminster carpet were two bedside rugs, and a fringed hearthrug in front of the Pantheon stove. As well as a small hanging mirror there was an oval swing-glass in a mahogany frame. She also had a mahogany leather-topped writing table with drawer, and for her toilet a japanned tray-top dressing table, a blue and white basin and ewer, soap cups, water carafe, tumbler and brush tray. As no bath was listed in the house, a mahogany bidet with its Wedgwood basin was perhaps large enough for her to take a strip-wash. A dressing-room opposite hers contained a water closet.

She used to join Henry for an early breakfast, on the circular mahogany breakfast or loo table in the main dining room, before he rode off on horseback to Austen, Maunde & Tilson's bank at 10 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. Having no piano to practise on, she spent what she called a 'long quiet morning' in his business room or study, being almost half-way through the composition of *Emma*. Of the various tables to work at, she probably chose the mahogany bureau secretaire with rising flap drawers. For a break in her writing, she could open the French window and go down the steps for a stroll round the well-kept garden, which she admired as 'quite a Love'.[5]

Henry's housekeeper, Mme Bigeon, and her daughter, Mme Perigord, ran the house with great proficiency, and their cuisine was exemplary. In the previous year, Jane Austen had enjoyed one of their 'most comfortable' simple meals at Henrietta Street, of Soup, Fish, Bouillee [stewed or boiled meat], Partridges & an apple Tart', served at 5 p.m. after a lengthy and tiring journey. She then understandably experienced the 'feeling that we were most commodiously disposed of'.[6]

The close friends or favoured clients, invited to Hans Place for formal meals, ate at a mahogany dining table (the chairs being also of mahogany with stuffed leather-covered seats), off a blue and white dinner set; the silverware ranged from a gadrooned dish down to miniature salt spoons. In his cellar were no fewer than 48 dozen sauterne wines, 6 dozen madeiras and 2 dozen Constantia wines from the Cape – the last-named of a kind memorably offered by the good-natured Mrs Jennings to soothe Marianne Dashwood's disappointed heart.[7]

For recreation after dinner, backgammon and draught boards and a set of chessmen were housed in a sofa table with sliding top. If Henry organized rubbers of whist, as at some of his sister's fictional parties, other tables could be set up with 'a pair of ship card racks' handy. The Anne Elliots of the party, who declined to play, could wander round the drawing room and admire the gilt-framed chimney glass, the two pairs of bronze cupids and female figures supporting the lights – perhaps the same 'chimney lights' that Eliza and Jane had searched for in 1811[8] – and the five framed medallions of the royal family and seven unnamed portraits. The elegant French curtains, made of superfine chintz cotton, were lined with fine calico festoon draperies. If Jane Austen felt that the profusion of mahogany



and gilt betrayed the tastes of a *nouveau riche,* and contrasted too piquantly with the unshowy elegance of Pemberley or Donwell Abbey, she doubtless kept her thoughts to herself.

Henry Austen as army agent and banker

Henry had worked very hard to achieve this degree of opulence. As a young officer in the Oxford militia, at 24 he had been appointed acting paymaster, and later paymaster, of his regiment.[9] Resigning in 1801 with an excellent reputation, as well as many potentially valuable social contacts, he set up as an army agent, for distributing money to regiments, with an office in St James's, London, and a residence in Upper Berkeley Street, near Portman Square. His partner was Henry Maunde, a former fellow militia officer. In 1804 they moved to The Courtyard, Albany, Piccadilly.

Some time in 1806, Henry established the bank of Austen, Maunde & Austen in Henrietta Street. The third partner was his brother Frank, lately home from sea and enjoying ample prize money from his earlier cruises. The West-end banks, such as this, tended to be relatively small and specialized, often conducting the London and general business of country landowners; in Henry's case, many were senior officers and aristocrats he had come to know socially. Still involved with his agencies, he dealt with the army bank, Greenwood Cox & Co, and was less concerned with money market and commercial matters than the City of London banks were.[10] He opened Austen, Gray & Vincent's bank at 10 High Street, Alton in 1806 and sister banks at Petersfield and Hythe shortly afterwards.[11]

Henry recruited to the Henrietta Street bank another ex-colleague from the Oxfordshires, James Tilson, whose daughter Charlotte later married Henry's distant cousin, the Revd John Thomas Austen. Tilson had been a partner in Dorset & Co's bank in New Bond Street until it closed its doors in 1803, but was soon discharged from his bankruptcy.[12] In 1809 he became a bank partner. A year later Frank Austen, then captain of the *St Albans*, convoyed a shipment of silver from

China on behalf of the East India Company, being rewarded with some silver plate and with £1,500 that was no doubt invested by Henry. It is not known why he resigned from the bank in 1813.

Also in 1813, Henry further enhanced his status as a banker by being appointed Receiver-General of land and assessed taxes for Oxfordshire, responsible for the collection of these taxes. His predecessor was John Spencer, the son of Lord Charles Spencer of Wheatfield House, Oxfordshire, himself son of the 3rd Duke of Marlborough and Henry's former commanding officer in the militia.[13] John Spencer was apparently debarred from remaining in that office because his London bank, Boldero of Cornhill, had closed in January 1813 and he owed the government £17,000 for tax receipts not yet handed over.[14]

In July 1813 Jane Austen reported to Frank that Henry was now Receiver-General, having earlier acted as the deputy.[15] Those officials made quarterly tours round their counties and took charge of money from the parish collectors for forwarding to London. To safeguard its revenues, the government required sureties, preferably from well-off landowners. On 24 July 1813, therefore, Edward Knight, James Leigh Perrot and their second cousin (Sir) Thomas Philip Hampson entered into a bond with the Exchequer for £73,000. This was renewed on 9 August 1814 and raised to £80,000 on 17 August 1815. [16]

According to Jane Austen, in mid-September 1813 Henry made his first peripatetic 'November collection' of taxes from Oxfordshire, required to reach the Exchequer by the end of the financial year, 5 January 1814.[17] His far from generous remuneration was at the rate of 2d. in the £ for the land tax proceeds and 1½d. for assessed taxes, plus allowances for deputies' and clerks' fees and for travelling expenses. In 1814 he earned only £200 on a yield of £24,000 for land taxes and £440 for £71,000 assessed taxes received, and received £270 for expenses. However, he could hold the money for six weeks in the year and maintain balances of up to £6,000: useful funds for a bank.[18]

Jane Austen at Hans Place

On 4 October 1815, Henry brought his sister from Chawton to London for what was planned as a shortish holiday. Two Mondays later, on the 16th, he came home early from work with a feverish bilious attack. His friend, the surgeon Charles Thomas Haden, at once subjected him to the drastic medical treatment of the day by purging him with calomel and bleeding him no fewer than three times. The debilitated Henry lay in bed, 'ready to swallow anything. He lives upon Medicine, Tea & Barley water', as Jane Austen wrote home on the 17th. She then noted in her usual methodical manner that his 'Oxfordshire Business' of tax collection was fast approaching.[19] The following Sunday, 22 October, she grew alarmed enough to send express letters to Cassandra, Edward and James. Edward reached London the next day; James picked up Cassandra from Chawton, and the pair arrived at Hans Place on the 25th.

While Henry rested on the feather mattress in his king-sized japanned bedstead, with canopy, which he had once shared with Eliza, the four brothers and sisters

must have had serious discussions among themselves on the floor below. A glance round the room made clear that he was living at considerable expense, 'but not more than might become the head of a flourishing bank' as Caroline Austen perhaps over-charitably commented in her reminiscences.[20]

Jane Austen would have had much to report. She had observed the comings and goings of recent days, which gave the impression that all was not well with Henry's affairs. As a keen newspaper reader, she knew that in the eighteen months since Napoleon first abdicated, the economy had turned from boom conditions to retrenchment and recession, especially in rural areas, where country banks had to cope with many farmers' bad debts. No doubt through her questioning of Henry, she had learnt something about finance: in *Sanditon* she included a debate on whether the arrival of a wealthy West Indian family would bring the resort general prosperity, or merely put up the prices of bread and meat.[21] The two brothers must have questioned her closely, as they both had much at stake if the London bank were in serious difficulty.

James stood to lose hundreds of pounds as a guarantor of some of Henry's army agency funds; so did the absent Frank. Edward was a surety of the Receiver-General's funds, on top of having recently become a defendant in a lawsuit to claim the Chawton estate brought by the Hintons, his mother's neighbours in Chawton Lodge, and their nephew James Baverstock, the 'clever and rather scampish' Alton brewer.[22] However, after a few days Henry appeared to be on the mend, and the brothers went their separate ways.

Cassandra stayed for another four weeks or so, leaving behind Jane, who subsequently wrote to her what read like coded messages. On 24 November, she mentioned Henry's remark about his recent letter to Edward: 'One part alas! cannot be very amusing to anybody. --I wonder that with such Business to worry him, [Henry] can be getting better.' On the 26th she wrote, 'Henry is so well, that I cannot think why he is not perfectly well.' On 2 December she quoted Tilson's observation to her that their attorney, William Seymour, 'thought there was not the least occasion for [Henry's] absenting himself any longer' from 10 Henrietta Street.[23]The Alton bank had crashed on the 28th and the managing partner, Edward William Gray, had been declared bankrupt. Although Henry had terminated his partnership with Gray in the previous October, he may have felt it wise to keep out of the way of the authorities.

For a fortnight before the crash, Gray and the third partner William Vincent had been siphoning off all but a few shillings of the bank's liquid assets, and acrimonious legal actions were to follow.[24] Most seriously for Henry, Gray owed the London bank £6,500 for the notes and cash balances at Alton, as well as a further £3,200 from other transactions. A few days later, Vincent's own bank at Newbury suffered a spectacular robbery, no less than £20,000 in cash and notes being stolen. Vincent later admitted under official examination that the bank had been technically insolvent for some years, and the authorities suspected an inside job, though that was never proved.[25] On 16 December, Jane Austen left Hans Place – as it happened, for the last time – and in Chawton that evening celebrated with

her immediate family both her fortieth birthday and the publication of *Emma*. That celebration must have been dampened by what she had to tell about Henry's financial troubles.

The Chawton winter 1815-16

Henry had clearly lent considerable funds to his three country banks while the wartime agricultural boom had promised high returns. Following the Alton crash, on 23 December he therefore had to borrow, on a promissory note, no less than £10,325 from his brother Edward.[26] Then he was off to Oxford, to scamper round his delayed collection of taxes and on Christmas Day to serve the second of that year's Extents-in-Aid or sequestration orders on non-payers, totalling £5,250.[27] Cassandra seems to have gone to stay with him in London very early in the New Year.

Jane attempted to resume her writing routine at home, and as 1816 got under way it became clear that all five of her active brothers were in difficulties of one kind or another. On 17 January Henry let his house in Hans Place furnished to a neighbour for up to 12 months, and he apparently mortgaged the leasehold of the house as well. James Tilson likewise mortgaged his nearby residence of 26 Hans Place to his affluent brother, Christopher Chowne, as security for a £1,100 debt.[28] Just a month later, there came news of Charles's ship, the *Phoenix*, having been wrecked – with no loss of life – off the coast of Greece. As the commanding officer, he would have to face a court martial; whatever the verdict, he stood very little chance of a further peacetime command on full pay.[29]

James, in visibly declining health, was short of money, as his tenant at Warren Farm in Steventon had recently failed and lost him a substantial part of his glebe income.[30] His and Frank's guarantees over Henry's militia agency were still outstanding. Although no longer a bank partner, Frank had a great deal at stake. In 1814 he and Henry had jointly bought a share in the Westminster Life Insurance Society for £3,000, Frank lending Henry his £1,500 share (later found to be worth only £600) on a promissory note. Edward had the £80,000 surety hanging over him, while the Hintons' and Baverstocks' legal challenge was proving to be graver than at first imagined.

Any tidings from London must therefore have been awaited at Chawton with some concern. In the second week of March, the elements brought no cheer; Jane Austen, always sensitive to the vagaries of the English climate, noted the 'sad weather' day after day, as the village pond opposite them overflowed, the roads grew dirtier and the cottage's walls more and more damp, '& we sit wishing every bad day may be the last'. In a different sense, the family were very soon to endure a whole succession of bad days.

During that week Henry and James Tilson, and a few days later Henry and Seymour, turned up unexpectedly in their post chaises at the cottage, either because of bank business at Alton or on the way to consult Frank, who had rented the Great House from Edward.[31] Then on 15 March the bank in Henrietta Street stopped payment, the partners being named as bankrupts (Henry as 'Austin') in the next day's *London Gazette*.[32] At once the Commissioners of Bankruptcy

appointed 12 jurors to discover the amount of his and his partners' debts; while these remained unpaid, a threat of imprisonment hung over him. A week later William Stevens Louch, his partner at the Petersfield and Hythe banks, was gazetted for bankruptcy.[33]

Successive hearings of creditors were held at the London Guildhall before the end of April, and on 1 May his total debt to the Crown was assessed at £44,000. He had not paid over part of his Receiver-General's receipts for 1814, amounting to £30,600 – he had clearly been in financial trouble all through 1815 – and £13,600 of the current year's bill was also outstanding. The authorities at once demanded these sums from the sureties. Hampson apparently wriggled out of his obligation, and Edward Knight and James Leigh Perrot had to pay £21,000 in instalments between April 1816 and 18 March 1817: coincidentally the date on which Jane Austen wrote the final words of her unfinished novel *Sanditon*.[34] Ten days later, on 28 March, Leigh-Perrot died; his widow then had to sell securities worth over £8,600 towards the remainder of the debt, which the authorities required to be paid off by 1818 at the latest. Edward's share was two-thirds and the Leigh-Perrot estate one third. Thus their losses as sureties were higher than the £30,000 quoted by Caroline Austen.[35]

The total sums involved in the bank failure were substantial for that era. In a rough balance sheet Henry put his total debts at £58,000, equivalent to above £2 million at 1990s values. He listed his assets at £52,000, seemingly enough to cover most debts. However, he and his partners in all four banks had been granting personal loans on an almost reckless scale. Of the £33,000 outstanding bills and promissory notes with known dates of issue, over £14,000 went back before 1814, one as early as 1805. Even in December 1815, after the Alton crash, more than £2,900 of loans had been made, and between January and 15 March of the current year, almost £7,000.

Many of the bank's debtors were grandees who cared little about repayments. The Earl of Moira, currently Governor-General of Bengal and a notorious spendthrift, owed the bank no less than £6,500, none of which was ever recovered despite repeated correspondence over several decades.[36] Lord Charles Spencer, the former militia colonel, owed £2,000 while his son John, the previous Receiver-General, owed a total of £7,200 but had decamped to St Omer to evade his creditors. Lord Balgonie, whose parents Jane Austen had met in Bath during 1805, owed £287. Lord Crewe, a major-general, owed £2,100; a lengthy court case yielded £1,600, but not until 1836.

The aftermath

For the whole Austen family, April 1816 proved to be a highly anxious month. At its centre was Mrs Austen, now 76. So far from being a crotchety and resented hypochondriac, she kept herself occupied with needlework and, when it was fine, with energetic gardening. Yet the rainfall persisted, and Easter-tide, in mid-month, was a sad penance for her; being unable to venture out of doors, and thus to escape from what must have been a preoccupied atmosphere in the cottage, she suffered

recurrent headaches.[37] Also in April, Charles's court-martial took place on board the *Boyne*, in the Bay of Tunis, and his exoneration, when the shipwreck was adjudged to have been the pilot's fault, provided some relief.[38]

Further reassuring news was that on 8 June Henry and his London partners were officially discharged from their bankruptcy, having surrendered all their assets and satisfactorily answered the Court's queries.[39] Release probably came too late for Maunde, who had lost not only his homes in the Strand and the future Euston Road but also expectations of a substantial legacy. In September he died, either by suicide or from a broken heart.[40] Maunde's relatives, from whom the legacy was snatched, wrote piteous letters to Edward Knight, bitterly denouncing Henry's 'defalcation' and 'country speculations', but Edward felt unable to help. Tilson, clearly a survivor, jogged along nicely on the £500-700 a year given him by friends and relatives: his brother, John Henry, succeeded as Receiver-General for Oxfordshire, and he himself was soon signing the accounts as deputy.

The Austen womenfolk were not protected from the financial fall-out. Jane Austen lost the £25.7.0 (not £13.7.0) she had on deposit, although mercifully £600 of her royalties had been invested in Navy 5 per cent Stock.[41] Henry and Frank had to discontinue the payments to their mother of £50 each. Most had been prepared for the bankruptcy. Only James's wife Mary seems to have been kept in the dark, being too insecure and prickly to be trusted with strict confidences, even by her husband. 'First heard of Henry being a bankrupt', she wrote in her diary of 16 March, and her daughter Caroline may have been mistaken when writing of the event, 'an entire surprise at our house, and as little foreseen I believe by the rest of the family.' [42]

Despite these losses, the clannish Austens took the bank crash in their stride. According to Caroline, 'there always was perfect harmony amongst the brothers and sisters'; as she explained, 'the family talk had much of spirit and vivacity, and it was never troubled by disagreements as it was not their habit to argue with each other'.[43] Among them, the only recorded hostile reaction came from James Leigh Perrot's widow: 'Nor would I have Henry's feelings (if he does feel) for [what] he has occasion'd us to lose by his imprudence'. Only the recent inflow of funds from the Stoneleigh estate, she went on, 'could enable us to bear with our losses. Where would my pretty Scarlets [her Berkshire home] have gone then?'[44]

The rest of the family maintained an almost saintlike amity and forbearance. To recover from the Guildhall hearings that April, Henry spent a complete fortnight with Edward at Godmersham, Jane approvingly commenting, 'no doubt it will have done him good'. Between April and October, he stayed at James's rectory in Steventon for a total of 13 days. In September, after he had proposed himself to Chawton, she wrote to Cassandra – then at Cheltenham – that 'he cannot come too soon', even though 'they will hardly part with him at G[odmersha]m yet'. Having resolved to take orders, in December he was ordained with the Bishop of Winchester's permission, becoming curate of Chawton at 52 guineas a year.[45]

This calamity and its aftermath must have cruelly distracted Jane Austen in her writing of *Persuasion*. Such events help to explain some of the book's weaknesses

that have so concerned critics over the years. She planned her later novels in careful detail; this one was started, in August 1815, apparently as a three-volume work, with a 'slow, static and at times laborious opening' and an initial cast of characters larger than needed for the story in its published form. Some of these characters show promise of entertaining development, but then either vanish, as does Mr Shepherd the lawyer, or like the Crofts play a relatively minor role.[46]

Perhaps after more or less continuous work until her October visit to Henry, the succession of endless family debates, no less harmful to her concentration by being free of rancour, then compelled her to scale down the novel to two volumes and skimp the concluding part. In Volume II of the unrevised version, Chapters IX to XI read like a first draft, which scurries through Mrs Smith's scarcely credible tale and its consequences with more than the author's usual dispatch. Had Henry shown due prudence as a banker, *Persuasion* might have turned out to be incomparably the greatest of his sister's novels.

The bankruptcy case dragged on until long after her death. Edward had to pay over nearly £11,000 in February 1818, only a month after he offered £15,000 to extinguish all further claims by the Hintons and Baverstocks on the Chawton estate. In April the Court allowed the sureties to take over from the Crown the task of recovering outstanding debts: those to Henry personally totalled £10,650 and to the bank £9,300.[47] James Austen died in 1819, and two years later his widow Mary had to find £400, Frank as co-guarantor paying an equal sum, to clear an irregularity in a past army agency account: in her words, 'a heavy blow to me'.[48] In 1822 Edward needed to pay arrears of £15 on an Oxford militia account that dated back to 1799.

By the mid-1830s the sureties had clawed back all but £2,800 of the £20,000 uncollected debts. Then in 1841 the Bankruptcy Court was on the point of winding up the case, only to encounter delay from some last-minute pleas by creditors. The bank's own liabilities to depositors and note holders, satisfactorily proved to the court, came to about £10,300, and a dividend equivalent to 33 pence in the £ was to be declared. [49]

His lawyers reminded Edward Knight that £42 owing to James's executors and £536 to Charles had not yet been proved. Among the proved debts to the family were the following:

Mrs Cassandra Austen	£132. 6.6
Captn F.W. Austen	292.18.2
Miss Jane Austen	25. 7.0
Edward Knight Esq.	493. 8.3

'Are either of the two ladies above named living?' enquired the lawyers in all innocence.[50] In 1843 the bankruptcy case was formally closed, with payment of a further 17 per cent dividend.[51] Hence those lucky enough to have established their claims, including Cassandra on her mother's and sister's behalf, got back half of what had been owing to them.

Not until almost seven decades later did his collateral descendants openly voice the well-justified criticism that Henry had 'possessed an almost exasperating

buoyancy and sanguineness of temperament and high animal spirits which no misfortune could depress and no failures damp'.[52] This charge merely echoed the crisper sisterly judgment by Jane herself, that 'his Mind is not a Mind for affliction. He is too Busy, too active, too sanguine', or even more succinctly of another escapade, 'Oh! what a Henry.'[53]

My thanks are due to Deirdre Le Faye for supplying xeroxes, answering queries and other assistance (see Note 4), to Dr P.J. Kulisheck for references to the bank failure in the Public Record Office (PRO) and the Knight archives in Hampshire Record Office (HRO), and to Dr Clive Caplan for xeroxes, advice and further helpful references. Dr Caplan's article, 'Jane Austen's banker brother: Henry Thomas Austen of Austen & Co, 1801-1816', *Persuasions* No 20, 1998, admirably complements the present account. As the Austen bankruptcy file in the PRO B3 series has been destroyed, this article would have been far more difficult to write but for their generous sharing of information with me. I am also grateful for help from the staffs of the PRO and HRO, Mr A. Cross, curator of the Curtis Museum, Alton, and Mr P. Winterbottom, archives manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland, for access to Henry Austen's account at Child's bank, 1798-1808.

Notes

1. D. Le Faye, *Jane Austen: A Family Record* (London, 1989) pp. 178-9.
2. W. Watson, 'Jane Austen's London homes', *Jane Austen Society Collected Reports 1949-1965* (Chawton, 1967) pp. 74-8; idem, *Jane Austen in London* (Chawton, 1960) p. 12.
3. D. Le Faye (ed.), *Jane Austen's Letters* (3rd ed Oxford, 1995) pp. 270-1.
4. The inventory of 23 Hans Place in PRO E 144/77, a reference I owe to Dr Kulisheck. It runs consecutively, and Deirdre Le Faye has skilfully divided it up into rooms. I have followed her suggestions. Further particulars about the bankruptcy are in E 144/79 and 81.
5. *Letters* pp. 270, 272.
6. *Letters* p. 218.
7. *Sense and Sensibility* (ed. R.W. Chapman, Oxford, 1933) pp. 197-8.
8. *Letters* p. 181.
9. J. Breihan and C. Caplan, 'Jane Austen and the militia', *Persuasions* No 14 (1992) pp. 16-26; C. Caplan, 'Jane Austen's soldier brother; the military career of Captain Henry Thomas Austen of the Oxfordshire regiment of militia, 1793-1801', *Persuasions* No 18 (1996) pp. 122-43.
10. The difference between City banks and West-end banks is discussed in L.S. Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, 1956) esp. pp. 75 ff., and L.S. Pressnell and J. Orbell (eds), *A Guide to the Historical Records of British Banking* (Aldershot, 1985) pp. xv-xvi.
11. The dates of the various Austen banks are taken from D. Le Faye's note in her edition of the *Letters* pp.487-8 and from F.G. Hilton Price, *A Handbook of London Bankers* (London, 1890-1) p. 3, as amended after private correspondence with Dr Caplan. For the Alton bank see *Natproban* (Official organ of National Provincial Bank Staff Association) 33 No 129 (Summer 1952) pp. 31-2.
12. Dorset & Co's bankruptcy papers are in PRO B3/1268-75.
13. For Lord Charles and John Spencer see R.G. Thorne (ed.) *The History of Parliament:*

The House of Commons 1790-1820 V. Members Q-Y (1986) pp. 229-32, 237-8.

14. *British Parliamentary Papers (BPP)* 1812 viii pp. 24, 84.
15. *Letters* p. 215.
16 PRO E 144/77; *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen* (Chawton, 1986) p. 48. Her figure of £30,000 is incorrect.
17. *Letters* pp. 219, 221.
18. 'Report of Select Committee on duties of Receivers-General of land and assessed taxes', *BPP* 1821 viii p. 8. Henry Austen's remuneration for year ended 5 January 1816 is given in *BPP* 1817 xiv pp. 131-3.
19. *Letters* pp. 291-2.
20. Caroline Austen, *Reminiscences* p. 48.
21. Jane Austen, *Minor Works* (ed R.W. Chapman, Oxford, 1954) pp. 392-3; cf. the effect of the Duchess of York's presence in Bath on the price of salmon (1801), *Letters* p. 82.
22. Le Faye, *Family Record* pp. 194-5; *Letters* p. 495.
23. *Letters* pp. 299, 301-2.
24. *Hampshire Chronicle* 4 December 1815, 21 July 1817; *London Gazette* 5 December 1815; PRO B1/134 pp. 253-7.
25. *Hampshire Chronicle* 18 and 25 December 1815; *London Gazette* 23 December 1815. The Vincent bankruptcy papers are in PRO B 3/5117-20.
26. The promissory note is in HRO Knight archive 18M61 Box F6 (in three bundles, unsorted). Henry repaid just over £5,400 in instalments between 27 January and 2 March 1816.
27. *BPP* 1816 xviii p. 152.
28. HRO 18M61 Box F6.
29. Le Faye, *Family Record* p. 211.
30. HR0 18M61 Box F6, Mary Austen to Edward Knight, 23 March 1841.
31. *Letters* pp. 310-11.
32. *London Gazette* 16 March 1816, *Times* 16 March 1816 ('We regret to state').
33. *London Gazette* 23 March 1816.
34. PRO E 144/77 and 79; *BPP* 1817 xii p. 95.
35. HRO 18M61 Box F6.
36. ibid. Correspondence with Moira (by then Marquess of Hastings) is in HRO 29M89 F112/1-6, 1817-23; see also 18M61 Box 6, Frank Austen to Edward Knight, 7 February 1819. For Lord Balgonie see *Letters* p. 105.
37. *Letters* p. 314.
38. J. Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Supplement II (1828) p. 76, cited in G.H. Tucker, *A Goodly Heritage* (Manchester, 1983) p. 187.
39. *London Gazette* 18 May 1816; to come into effect on 8 June.
40. *Gentleman's Magazine* 86 Part II (1816) p. 472. A search of the London newspapers did not yield the exact date or cause of death.
41. Le Faye, *Family Record* p. 211. For the figure of £25.7.0 see note 50 below.
42. HRO 23M93/62/1/7, Mary Austen's diary, 16 March 1816; Caroline Austen, *Reminiscences* p. 47.
43. Caroline Austen, *My Aunt Jane Austen : A Memoir* (Chawton, 1991) p. 6.
44. HRO 23M93/60/2/8, Jane Leigh Perrot to James Austen, 31 January 1819.
45. *Letters* pp. 314, 318. For Henry's ordination see Le Faye, *Family Record* p. 212.
46. M. Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford, 1987) p. 276; R. Gard, *Jane Austen's Novels: The Art of Clarity* (1992) pp. 186-7.

47. PRO E 127/61/310, 17 April 1818. This series records the Court of Exchequer's decisions on the case until its equity business ceased in 1841.
48. HRO 18M61 Box F6, Mary Austen to Edward Knight 5 March 1841.
49. ibid, Day and Hughes (lawyers) to Edward Knight 18 February, 16 April 1841 and 25 January 1842.
50. ibid, Day and Hughes to Edward Knight 9 February 1841.
51. *London Gazette* 14 and 17 March, 2 May 1843.
52. W. Austen-Leigh and M.G. Knight, *Chawton Manor and its Owners* (London, 1911) pp. 163-4. This appears to be the family's first acknowledgement of Henry's bankruptcy.
53. *Letters* pp. 215, 264.

'Everyone here talks of war'

Helen Lefroy



Nine years of war with France ended in March 1802 when the Treaty of Amiens was signed. It was an uneasy respite and by May 1803 England was again at war. Across the Channel Napoleon assembled an army to invade England.

At Ashe Rectory Mrs Lefroy was much alarmed. Two of her three surviving sons were of military age. George was studying for a degree at Christ Church, Oxford; Edward, the second son, was studying law at Newport, Isle of Wight. Mrs Lefroy wrote to Edward two or three times a week until her death in December 1804; George wrote less frequently. Punctuation is erratic. Some words were lost as a hole was made in the paper when the seal on the folded sheet was broken. Square brackets indicate these breaks in the text.

Canterbury, 20 October 1802 Everyone here talks of war.

Cork Street, London, 3 November ... they say the French Ambassador is hourly expected. Which is true I know not.

Ashe, 10 March 1803 Your Father bids me say that at present he cannot *approve* of your entering into a Volunteer, or any other Corps; that if it ever becomes necessary for all the young men to arm, he certainly would not wish you to shrink from the task, but till then he thinks it will only tend to unsettle & take you from your employment without being of any use.
8 May this neighbourhood furnishes no news there is a kind of fearful hope that we may still have peace but it is by all thought to be very uncertain
15 May I will first answer the most important part of your letter that which regards your going into the Volunteers your father desires me to say he would not upon any account have you do it at present then when *all* other young men are called upon to come forward he does not mean to wish that you should shrink but that till the absolute necessity arrives he thinks the entering into any Corps a very bad plan Stephen Terry with whom your father talked upon the subject on Thursday last said entering into a Volunteer Corps in the Isle of Wight was one of the worst & most ruinous plans a young man could pursue & that if he could prevail his brother should not do it upon any account so you see we are not singular in our opinion upon the subject but even a Soldier & I believe a very good one advises against it in case of actual invasion I am sure you would exert yourself as much as anyone in defence of your country your Religion & in short anything that is dear to you & God forbid I should prevent your coming forward in such a glorious cause I think I could hand Cartridges if not fire a musket myself upon such an occasion.
26 July We found George in a great bustle. He & John Harwood & James Austen have been round the parishes of Ashe Deane Steventon & Hannington they have got a list of near 100 names. Your father & Holder have subscribed 50 p^{ds} each & John Harwood, George & James Austen 10 each towards the expences of raising (?) this Company Holder is to be Capt^{n}. I believe J: Harwood Lieut^{nt} and George Ensign they are going immediately to apply to Lord Bolton about their commissions the Corps are to meet tonight at Deane & I have been all this morning employed in making camp colours to mark out the ground
1 August I will now give you a full & true account of all our proceedings in this parish, with regard to the Volunteers On Wednesday Holder, your Brother & John Harwood met Lord Bolton at Winchester, he approved very much of the plan of raising volunteers, but did not think it right that Clergymen should have military commissions it is therefore settled that Holder shall be Capt^{n}, George, H. Digweed & W: Knight Lieutenants & H. Fellowes (?) of Hannington Ensign. Holder & George are now gone to Hackwood to apply for their commissions – the men have met twice, & are really a very good Corps of 120 men, composed of the parishes of Ashe Deane & Hannington —... John Portal is coming forward most handsomely, & raising a Troop of Horse at his own expence, of which he gives Col^{nl} Warren the command, (Rice is to be a Sergeant in the corps) & will mount both himself & his son Robert upon very fine chargers – ... George is in a continual bustle I shall be very glad when the whole plan is settled for now there is nothing but riding about the country, & consultations, both here & at Deane. it keeps one in continual agitation by calling before ones imagination the threats of our enemies. I do not

however feel much afraid, the God in whom we trust will not I hope forsake us in the hour of danger if such should arrive

3 August George is so busy I see little of him Holder leaves (?) all the trouble to him I think as he does this & as your father & Brother together have subscribed much more than he has he may [ ] to leave to George the command of the company & so others think as well as myself but I fear he will not do this. They are so alarmed in Kent about Invasion that your Uncle Harrisons servants have of themselves formed a little Corps & exercise every evening your Uncle Egerton has raised a troop & your Uncle Edward will I believe command a company of Infantry as he did before

9 August I have just heard of the alarm which was spread in the Isle of Wight on Sunday last Thank God that it was only an alarm pray send me the particulars as soon as you *possibly can* –

... Holders & George's company is raised according to the directions of the act. They have not yet got their commissions but are drilling the men every night –

... your Uncle Egerton's troop is raised & was reviewed with several others by the Duke of York –

16 August George is very busy about his or rather Holder's company They have received Lord Bolton's letter today saying Government has accepted of their offer. I believe they will be a very fine Corps Rice prefers Cavalry to Infantry & is therefore to be a Sergeant in John Portal's Troop

17 August George & your father are gone to Steventon to meet Holder & Bramston & finally settle the whole plan of their military undertaking –

28 August George is gone to meet the Men from the parish at Ashe Park – No commissions are yet come nor any Cloathes or arms ordered the Capt^{n} is so dilatory & irresolute that they are almost at a standstill Monday he resigned the command & signed a recommendation of George as his Successor to Lord Bolton Tuesday this paper was presented to Lord B: who of course asked Holder to continue the command tho' he declared he could have no objection to George at the first word the quondam Capt^{n} resumed his post & George continues his Lieutenant Wm Digweed is the Ensign –

23 September George is extremely busy in drilling the men for all the trouble falls upon him & if they do well all the credit will be Holders –

Undated, from George We have had so many meetings, so many occasions of indecision without doing any thing, that finding it was in vain I repeatedly urged the necessity of dispatch, I had almost resolved to give up all concern with it. I have not however done so, & Sunday last the men were sworn in to the amount of about 60 rank & file – we expect about 12 or 14 more which makes us up nearly 80 Officers included We however only give ourselves in at 60 rank & file so that there will I hope be many supernumary who are actually necessary in so fluctuating a Corps as ours must be which is much composed of Farmers Servants & people of that description.

Government is to allow 20 shillings a head towards the cloathing of the Volunteer Corps & the Uniform to be the same all thro' the County. This will be of course

plain enough but that does not signify. The great difficulty seems to be about arms, of which I understand a quantity equal to three times the number of militia in the County, that is enough for half the stipulated proportion of Volunteers...

12 October Holder is rather dilatory & the Company have not got their uniforms George is out of all patience & is afraid he must go to Oxford before the men are properly trained.

13 October, from George With regard to my return to College this Autumn I have been reduced to a most unpleasant dilemma. No arms were delivered to us till the end of last week, when 45 stand with accoutrements & a proportion both of ball and blank cartridge arrived. The remaining 20 stand (65 being the complement of rank & file corporals included) will we hope be speedily issued. The men of course all want instruction as to the use of arms & as Michaelmas makes great alterations in Farm houses we shall have many recruits to drill entirely. These circumstances of course have made it very difficult for me to leave home just now for two months. Consequently my Father wrote on Monday to the Dean of Ch.Ch. stating exactly how I am circumstanced & requesting his indulgence. His answer we expect tomorrow. It will of course decide my conduct as I should be extremely sorry to incur his serious displeasure by conduct which only motive of Duty, or at least supposed Duty, induced me to adopt. The men's Cloathes are now making at Basingstoke. Loder & Jackson have contracted for the whole of them at £2.5s.0d. per man including a jacket & pantaloon of Serjeant's cloth stock. Regulation cap & light infantry green [ ]

I own I was against having Serjeants cloth for the class of men that almost entirely compose the Corps I thought altogether unnecessary. The subscription now comes to about £200 - of which about £90 is from Oakley & £115 from this parish. Dummer has not given us any money meaning to bear the expence of its own men who are at best 16 in number.

You have not I sincerely [ ] experienced quite as much plague & vexation from your volunteering as I have from mine. The only argument that I can find to comfort me is that had nobody been willing to undertake trouble no volunteers could have been brought forward.

20 October George is extremely plagued by his Capt[ns] dilatoriness & indecision They have got their arms but their uniforms are not yet made

26 October I have sent you some Welsh flannel to make you drawers & an under waistcoat in case you should be called out to oppose the great enemy of the human race. I trust in God however he will never reach our shores.

13 November I wish you had been here yesterday (but indeed there is no day in which I do not wish you here) The Ashe Volunteers met & exercised in the field by Mr Harwood. They fired for the first time & so well that Lord Dorchester who came to see them said they need not be afraid to go thro' their exercise before any one – the regimentals are very neat & George looks remarkably well in them indeed the whole company make a very good figure & are a very fine body of men On Tuesday [ ] and the Kingsclere Whitchurch & Stratton companies with the Hurstbourne Park Yeomanry Cavalry are to be inspected at Overton by Col[nl] Duke

& I flatter myself the Ashe men will look as well as any in the field
16 November Yesterday Holders company with the Stratton, Whitchurch & Kingsclere Infantry & Hurstbourne Park Cavalry were reviewed by Col^{nl} Duke who is inspecting field officer of this district. Our men made a very good figure but were so confused by the way in which their Capt^{n} gave the word of command that they did not fire near such good volleys as they did the Saturday before – they have got their regimentals which are very neat & handsome –
21 November, from George The Corps goes on rather better than of late. They are attired & clothed, & have been inspected upon which occasion they [ ] some volleys of which I shall only [ ] there have been many better some worse
16 January 1804 Invasion is still the story in this neighbourhood but I do not believe it will take place at least till the Spring
? 14 February Col^{nl} Duke the day he inspected the Volunteers said how very much they were improved & desired Holder would thank both officers & men in his name This I think will give George great pleasure but Holder forgot to mention it for some days
19 February, from George at Oxford to his father The same post by which I recd your & my Mothers letter brought me one from Michael Terry giving an account of the inspection According to him Col. Duke after expressing his approbation of the mens appearance said that from having been exercised in such inconsiderable bodies they were at present useless & therefore they are to be formed into a Battalion with five other Companies. The Dean received me with great cordiality & talked of the Volunteers as if by no means displeased with the cause of my absence. Our conference was as usual mighty short & he'd scarcely said anything to me except that I was much improved by drilling.
2 March Rices or rather Col: Warrens Troop are again going on prosperously The men have repented of their unhandsome behaviour & many new ones have joined the Corps –
3 March, from George at Oxford It is my intention to leave Oxford in about a fortnight & if I can arrange it with the Dean I shall not come up till the end of May when I put on my Bachelors gown. You see the papers talk more than ever of the French preparations which do indeed seem to be very formidable. They have however, thank Heaven no small difficulty to get over in reaching our coast & even if they do in spite of our fleets (as ships are but boards sailors but men) reach our shores I trust that between Regular Militia & Volunteers they will be defeated tho' not perhaps quite so easily as some of us imagine.

You see that in the course of the debate upon Mr Yorke's bill the use of Volunteers has been much canvassed by Col. Crawford & some other Gentlemen. Much, probably, *may be said on both sides* yet I think that some little delicacy is due to the feelings of those who have come forward certainly in general upon honorable motives. Col. Duke upon his last inspection expressed, I hear, a strong wish that the Companies in our neighbourhood might be occasionally trained as a Battalion he went indeed so far as to say that when exercised in such very small Bodies as single Companies were of scarce any use. Some plan will, I hope, be resorted to



'Light Infantry Volunteers on the March' by Rowlandson

to bring this matter about.

11 March, from George at Oxford My present intention is to return either Saturday next, or to morrow sen'night at farthest & looking at the Volunteers to arrange how far it may be possible for me to leave Ashe for a day or two. I know not what to believe about the French. One is almost tired of expecting them & yet they must employ their flotilla some way or other.

12 March We expect George on Saturday next when I suppose he will be very busy with his Volunteers I do not believe much has been done since he went away. The Hurstbourne Park Cavalry are disbanded & some of the men of whom Rice is one talk of joining Sir Henry Mildmay.

20 March George arrived on Saturday evening he looks well & appears in tolerable spirits but is hurt at the little progress the men have made during his absence tho' he knows this only from report as he has not yet seen them. Captn Holder received yesterday an official letter from Lord Bolton recommending it strongly that the Company should go into quarters for any period not less than ten days or more than a month & expressing his wish that Holder would signifye to him his readiness to do so I doubt very much whether this advice will be complyed with tho' George is very eager for it but Holder has none of his zeal I wish he had I think both Capt^{n} & Lieut^{nt} would be the better for dividing the eagerness which now exclusively belongs to George.

29 March George returned home on Saturday sen' nite the men have not yet been out since he came back but they are to meet Saturday Monday & Wednesday next & on Sunday are with the Kingsclere to be inspected by Col^{nl} Duke I hope they will do better than they did the last time – the Cavalry are all to pieces & will probably soon be disbanded as I hear about thirty of them have already resigned – Rice talks of going into Mr Powlett's Troop but I rather hope he will have nothing more to do with soldiering except the French should really come when every young man must go forth –

George continues We have had an invitation from Government to go upon permanent duty for a little time – as you have I suppose it being a general thing. Nothing certainly would be so likely to teach Officers & men their Duty as soldiers & I am in hopes it will be accomplished. You & other Volunteers in large Towns can more easily get together & being in the habit of manoeuvring in bodies of

some weight may not be under the same necessity of going into Quarters but in our situation I see no chance of our becoming Soldiers in any other way. Ld Bolton on Monday last spoke to the Basingstoke Volunteers in hopes of persuading them sometimes to join us & the neighbouring Companies for the purpose of exercising but even his Lordships oratory which I understand was energetic & good produced no effect.. .What can be expected of such a *Dunghill* set.

Undated George is to dine at Hackwood tomorrow at a great military dinner when it is to be settled whether or not the men are to go upon permanent duty. Holder will be in town probably but at any rate he does not mean to join the party so that George is at present Commander of the Corps.

30 April Your father desires me to say he is not sure he has ever answered your question about Sunday drills. he wishes me to say if the men are exercised during the time of divine service he does not wish you to attend but if it is only after church he does not think there is anything wrong in it –

11 May Holder is in town It has been proposed to the Volunteers to go upon permanent duty for a fortnight but they have not yet given their answer if they do go these & the Kingsclere will join & go either to Odiam or Andover but I do not see how the farmers can spare their servants even for a fortnight. I suppose Holder will continue in town these three or four weeks & George of course will take the command

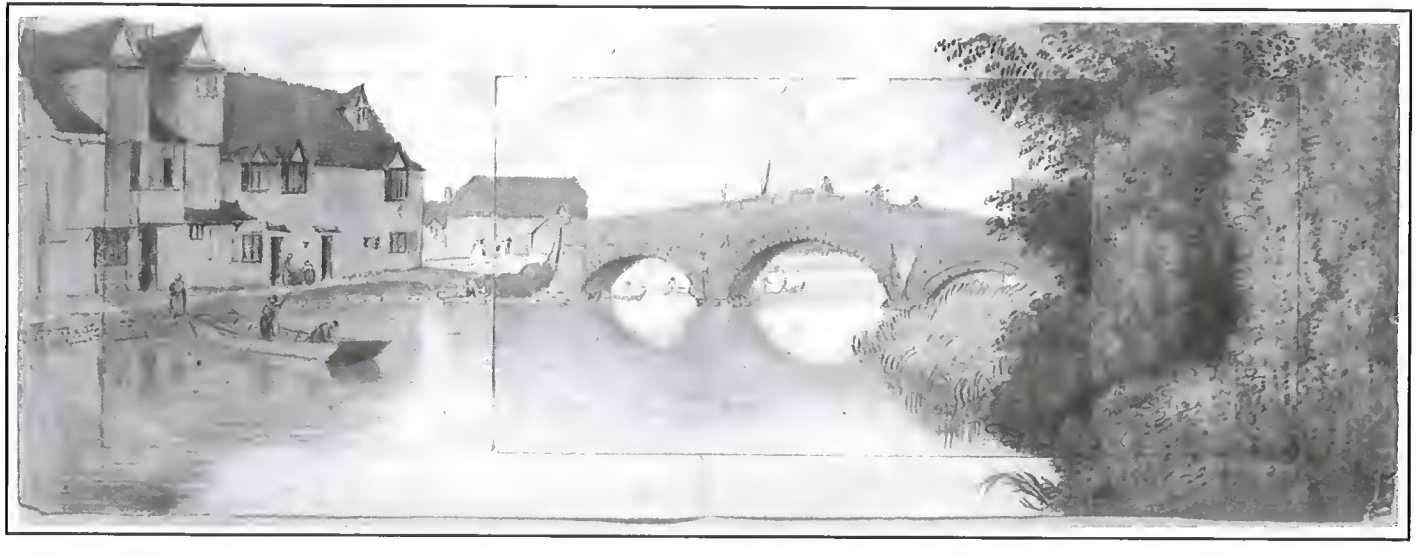
18 May Holder is in London & George of course has the command of the Volunteers during his absence the other day they were asked about going on permanent duty when about 38 of the 50 who were that day in the field turned out but it is yet uncertain whether so small a number will be accepted by government the Kingsclere have all refused to go if our men go at all they [ ] of its being either to Andover or Odiam

25 May, from George There seems little prospect of our [ ] upon permanent Duty & upon the whole I do not wish it if it can be avoided with any degree of honour. There are 350 Vol^{rs} now upon Duty at Basingstoke under Lt.Col. Porter the B^{stoke} Company mean to join them, I believe, for a week & Ld Bolton yesterday sent to me to meet the Officers at Hackwood to consider whether we could not meet them for a day or two's exercise which we shall probably contrive to do.

31 May George & his Volunteers met the Basingstoke (& 300 men were quartered there) upon Rooks Down in the whole there were above 500 men upon the ground & I assure you they made altogether a very military appearance Holder being in London George of course commanded our men

Undated but received 22 July, from George . . . it would be better for me to make my Kentish visit as soon as I can . . . but I cannot well go till after the 2^{d} of August when Col. Duke I understand proposes to inspect us. The cry of invasion is again renewed. I wish it were fairly at an end as I am convinced the patience of most people already begins to be exhausted.

My thanks to Clive Caplan, New York, for the illustrations.



A View of the High Bridge at Oxford and Fisher's Row *by J.B. Malchair*
© *The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*

James Austen — artist

David Selwyn

In her *Reminiscences* Caroline Austen writes that her father, the Revd James Austen, 'had great natural taste for drawing, and he had practised it a little in his youth'.[1] Though, so far as is known, no drawings or sketches by him have survived, the fact that he could draw, and more importantly that he understood the technical aspects of art, has some significance for his own poetry and perhaps also for his influence on his sister's writing. Whether James practised drawing as a child at Steventon rectory or as an undergraduate at St John's College, Oxford, is not known. For a period during the years 1789-90, however, while he was still resident in Oxford as a Fellow of St John's, he took lessons from the University drawing master, John Malchair; and it was from him that he learnt the principles of landscape painting that were to inform many of the descriptive passages in his verse. [2]

Malchair, a German by birth, had come to England some time about 1754, at the age of 24.[3] A musician as well as an artist, he played and gave lessons in London, Herefordshire and Bristol before arriving in Oxford in 1759, where he was appointed leader of the band at the Music Room, a position he retained until his retirement in 1792. He had also been making drawings and as soon as he settled in Oxford he began giving drawing lessons, building up a thriving practice among the undergraduates and college fellows, as well as the dons and their wives and families. His own works, mostly done in pencil and grey wash (though he also produced some etchings), were generally views taken in and around Oxford, often of places that were in danger from the attentions of 'improvers'. He frequently worked with pupils looking on, and it was sometimes necessary for him to draw at their level for purposes of instruction.

It was characteristic of Malchair to annotate the back of his drawings with comments on the circumstances in which they were made or interesting facts about the buildings and scenery they depicted. A watercolour view of the Hythe Bridge, Oxford, done in three sections pasted onto a larger sheet, and now in the Ashmolean Museum, is inscribed on the reverse: *A View of the Heigh Bridge at Oxford. taken by the River Side opposite the dwelling houses at the North ende of Fisher-Rowe June 9. 1789. The Milk-Man on the Bridge did more particularly engage the attention of my St. Thomas Parish Spectators. The Center part of this Drawing was done on the Spot with my Scholar M^r^ Austin Fellow of S^t^ John's College, Oxon. The Sides were added to compleate the Scene, which is imperfect without those Accompaniements, Artists too often draw at improper times and comme away with only the portion of a whole. So that theire works have the apearance of injury by amputation.*[4] James Austen, like any pupil, would have learnt equally from watching Malchair work and from working with him; and it is reasonable to assume that the pictures he produced would have in many ways resembled those of his teacher.

Besides the purely technical aspects of art, James must have absorbed many

of Malchair's principles concerning the drawing of landscape, and in particular his sensitivity to light, climate and atmosphere. In an unpublished treatise, 'Observations on Landskipp Drawing', Malchair wrote that the artist 'well knows that Nature can paint at all seasons & howers for she has an innumerable variety of extraordinary ways to produce effects for Painting, many of which are full as sublime and awful as the rising or setting sunn' (morning and evening being the times that were then generally considered best for painting).[5]

We have no pictures by James, perhaps because he modestly chose not to preserve them: he was, in the words of his son James Edward, 'For talents honour'd, though to few display'd'.[6] Nevertheless, a contribution he made to the *Loiterer,* the periodical he edited with Henry Austen while they were both up at Oxford, indicates the keenness of his eye, and suggests the kind of landscapes he is likely to have drawn. A conversation between two imaginary characters, 'Dr Villars' and 'Sensitive', on the manners of Oxford men is introduced with this description:

> It was indeed a day for meditation: The Sun emerging by fits from the grey fleckered clouds which overspread the whole atmosphere, illuminated the projecting points of Magdalen and Merton Towers, and shot its lengthened gleams across the pastures and meads, which extend themselves in a long level to the north of the City, while the woody hills of *Wytham* rising boldly from behind a flat country, threw over the whole back ground a broad mass of dark shadows, broken only here and there by a white sail, whose almost imperceptible motion just marked the various turns and winding of the river.[7]

Malchair made several pictures to which this passage bears a strong resemblance both in topography and atmosphere, and it is probable that James did so too.

James's understanding of composition and the effects of light served him well when he came to evoke landscape in his verse. Like the Tilneys in *Northanger Abbey,* he viewed the country 'with the eyes of persons accustomed to drawing, and decided on its capability of being formed into pictures'.[8] The eye with which he observes is that of the artist as much as the poet: viewpoint, perspective, tone and light are all considered as carefully as if the scene were being drawn rather than described. The opening of 'Selbourne Hanger', a description of the countryside surrounding the village of Gilbert White, the naturalist, might almost be said to constitute a drawing lesson: the spectator is invited to take as much care in observing the scene as if he were to depict it on paper:

> Would you view Selbourne Hanger right,
> You must go when Autumn's sun shines bright,
> And catches on the nearer ground;
> While from th'horizon's utmost bound,
> Some rising clouds his brighter rays
> Obscure with light & partial haze.
> 'Tis sweet on such a day as this
> To stand upon the precipice,
> And view, at first with dazzled eye,
> The landscape's wild variety.

The objects here in light displayed,
There half concealed in neutral shade,
As misty clouds across them sail,
Or vanish with the rising gale.
And when the eye with eager glance
Has ranged o'er all the wide expanse,
Surveyed the whole extent beneath,
Wandered o'er wood, & lawn & heath,
Delights [it] then, distinct each part
To trace, & see with master art
How nature works, when she designs,
How well each object she combines,
Contrasts her forms, & breaks her lines.
When with the whole combined effect
Our senses dazzled we collect,
The various parts we then explore,
Admire the wooded hill of Nore,
Whose steep sides give a double grace,
To the low grounds that skirt its base.
Next, Frensham, note thy well known pond
Shine a bright spot, & far beyond
See Wolmer, whose rich scenes could claim
In former years a forest's name,
Now a bare waste, where bush nor tree
Breaks the dark heath's monotony.
Onward, where lessening to the sight,
The hedgerows in one mass unite,
See Headley's woody vale beneath,
Surrounding hills of barren heath.
And rising to th'horizon's edge
View Liphook's steep & broken ledge.
Next, as we view the zigzag walk
Cut out upon th'indented chalk,
Or rest upon the rustic seat,
Retired yet cheerful, warm, & neat,
Mids't pendant slopes of lawn & tillage,
Beneath our feet appears the village.
Tis a sweet scene, & offers much
To tempt the artist's sketching touch ... [9]

From its fixed vantage point the reader's eye follows the poet's over 'the landscape's wild variety' as if it were looking at a picture rather than reading a poem; indeed, pictorial imagery is so deeply ingrained in the verse that both poet and reader — and even at one point nature herself — appear to be engaged in drawing the scene.

In a number of places in his poems James refers to the pleasure to be derived

from the occupation of drawing; indeed he sees it as greatly preferable to some of the more hectic social activities with which people attempt to ward off boredom:

> We are not of that number (Heaven be praised)
> Who find domestic life a dull affair,
> Unless each morning it's engagement bring:
> Haply some round of visits, whose best charm
> Is to find none at home; or better still,
> A numerous party anxiously conveyed
> Through dusty roads; upon barouche box high
> Some mounted, & some sunk on ponies small,
> To see a house, where nothing's to be seen
> Except the owner's miserable taste.
> We find a pencil has a powerful charm,
> On quiet morning's walk, to cheat the day...[10]

The contemplation of scenery, whether for drawing or not, provided a moral lesson; echoing Shakespeare's Duke Senior, who found 'tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, / Sermons in stones, and good in everything',[11] James wrote:

> Scenes like these can charm the mind,
> To muse and meditate inclined;
> In nature for instruction look,
> And draw improvement from her book.
> For he, who picturesque effects
> Admires with taste, but still neglects
> To draw from nature moral hints,
> Is like a child, who views the prints
> In some new book, with curious eye,
> But lets the words neglected lie.[12]

The vogue for 'picturesque effects' had been started by William Gilpin, whose much imitated travel books, illustrated by himself, not only encouraged people to visit areas such as South Wales, the Lakes and the Highlands, but also taught them how to appreciate their particular beauties. James Austen was an admirer of Gilpin and was well acquainted with his *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; On Sketching Landscape* (1792).[13] While still a Fellow at St John's he revealed a familiarity with the language of guide books in general in an amusing piece that he contributed to the *Loiterer,* satirising the subjective descriptions of places given by travellers. One writer might describe a certain castle as being

> comfortably placed in a bottom, securely sheltered by a range of steep downs and romantic clifts, (whose tops are veil'd in fogs) from the North and East winds, and open only to the South, where the eye is carried over a woody lawn to a comfortable lake, terminated by a most picturesque village, which, half lost in elm hedge rows, shuts the prospect.[14]

Meanwhile another would take quite a different view:

> The situation [of the castle] is, if possible, worse, and is, indeed, the *sink* of the

whole country; it is particularly calculated to catch the water which descends in streams from a long ridge of naked and barren hills, on whose tops it is either rain or fog eight months of the year. The only prospect it can boast is over a lawn, or paddock, or goose common, for each name is equally applicable; at the end of which is a *swampy fen,* which his Lordship's friend was so obliging as to call a lake, and the whole scenery is terminated by a miserable hamlet, whose ragged cottages present the mind with no other image than those of want, cold, and wretchedness.[15]

In the summer of 1818, the year before he died, James Austen made plans to go with his wife and Caroline on a tour down the River Wye, following in the footsteps of Gilpin, whose *Observations on the River Wye and several parts of South Wales etc., Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty* (1782) he had long known. In the event he felt unable to go so far and decided to confine the journey to Hampshire and Wiltshire; even then he had to turn back when they reached Salisbury.[16] Nevertheless, it is clear from notes he made on the tour that ill-health had done nothing to impair the sharpness of his eye in judging the quality of a landscape. Of the countryside between Chawton (where they called to see Mrs Austen) and Southampton he wrote:

Rather disappointed upon the whole—Country in parts only picturesque—Hills—& of course some interest of distance — ground falls sometimes in good lines — but deficient in wood—formal[?] copses with cold[?] outlines [17]

James's criticisms appear to anticipate Henry Tilney's 'lecture on the picturesque' to Catherine Morland at Beechen Cliff, with his talk of 'fore-grounds, distances, and second distances—side-screens and perspectives—lights and shades', which eventually leads her to reject 'the whole city of Bath, as unworthy to make part of a landscape'.[18]

James Austen had a more positive opinion of the prospect of Southampton. Standing at a popular viewpoint overlooking the town, he noted:

View of Southampton from the Hill above Bursledon[.] River—though often seen must always please. The River is a beautiful Estuary and the well wooded shores on each side are not usual ornaments so near the sea—The High downs of the Isle of Wight finish the scene.[19]

Not surprisingly he was very much impressed with Stonehenge, which he described not only in itself but in relation to the surrounding landscape:

From Sarum by Stone Henge to Amesbury—12 miles—Naked & wild—Stone Henge exceeded my expectations – there is something indescribably interesting in this extraordinary ruin for a Ruin it is.—If not strictly picturesque it is something better—The mind is carried back through many intervening centuries and the imagination aroused in wondering how when & for what purpose this rude mass was originally constructed.—

The wild and unadorned scenery around it—consisting of extensive tracts of short down—either bare—or sometimes I marked a few patches of Fir—stretching into the horizon—are in Character with the rude Pile, and increase the aweful kind of interest which is excited by this extraordinary monument

of Antiquity—Placed in the midst of a Scene of tame cultivation its effect would be destroyed—Even were it surrounded by the rich foliage of the New Forest—though the *whole* would be more beautiful—as an object the Henge would be less striking—[20]

In all James's descriptions the spirit of Gilpin can be strongly felt. On the way back to Steventon he noted:

Left Salisbury and all beauty of Scenery behind—and came home through Andover—30 miles—Country all the way to the latter place naked & uninteresting—a tolerable distance as we approach Andover but there is a poverty in all the landscape of this part of Hampshire. It wants the recommendation of Home[?] to give it any kind of interest to the traveller.[21]

Gilpin had similar reservations about much of the North Hampshire landscape. In his *West Tour* he wrote of the Steventon road that 'it passes through a country, with little picturesque beauty on either hand. It becomes by degrees flat and unpleasant, and soon degenerates into common-field land, which, with its striped divisions, is of all kinds of country generally the most unpleasant.[22]

At the end of James Austen's journey, which had not brought the improvement in his health for which he had hoped, he wrote:

We travel—Gilpin observes—for various purposes—and he enumerates several—but none, if I recollect them right—were exactly my purpose—. I travelled to get health—I.e—in the rational expectation that the woods and Heaths of the New Forest would brace relaxed nerves, and the motion of a Post Chaise—rectify a disordered stomach.[23]

It is unlikely that James did any sketching on this journey. Caroline makes no reference to his doing so in her account of it . Indeed she states that she had 'scarcely ever ... seen him with a pencil in his hand' until the summer of 1819, when he engaged a drawing master, Mr Sergeant, for her and began himself to take great pleasure in the drawing lessons.[24] He was already mortally ill and 'no longer equal to much exercise, and he was glad of an indoors occupation'; so he took up drawing again, 'and from this time he continued so to amuse himself, chiefly with indian ink sketches as long as he was able to hold the brush'. [25] In the last few months of his life, therefore, he found solace in returning to the art he had practised as a young man under the supervision of John Malchair, working, furthermore, in his teacher's favourite medium of pencil and wash. As winter drew on he was also writing a long poem, 'The Œconomy of Rural Life', which was left unfinished when he died. To the last he demonstrated the truth of what he had once written to James Edward in another context:

But most we value education,
Knowledge and taste, & information,
Because the highly cultured mind,
Resources in itself can find ...
And when November's frozen sky
And snowclad hills, their sport deny,
Can with a pencil or a book

Find pleasure, nor with fretful look
And feverish murmurings, pass away,
(A plague to all their friends,) the day.[26]

Notes

1. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen* (Hampshire, Jane Austen Society, 1986), p.55.
2. I am indebted to Peter Way for drawing my attention to the connection between James Austen and Malchair.
3. The details of Malchair's life and career are taken from Colin Harrison's essay 'Malchair the Artist' in his *John Malchair of Oxford: artist and musician* (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1998).
4. Quoted in Harrison, pp.114-5.
5. Quoted in Harrison, pp. 23-24.
6. MS of J. E. Austen-Leigh, memorial verse for James Austen's monument (1819), HRO 23M93/86/5/3.
7. *Loiterer* no. 58 (6 March 1790), p.5.
8. *Northanger Abbey,* ed. R. W. Chapman (3rd edn. Oxford, 1933), p.110.
9. 'Selbourne Hanger', 11.1-49, from MS collection of James Austen's poetry in the hand of J. E. Austen-Leigh, HRO 23M93/60/3/1.
10. James Austen, 'Lines Written at Steventon in the Autumn of 1814, after refusing to exchange that Living for Marsh Gibbon in the Borders of Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire', 11.99-110, HRO 23M93/60/3/1.
11. Shakespeare, *As You Like It,* II.i.
12. James Austen, 'Autumn' (1815), 11.67-76, HRO 23M93/60/3/1.
13. In his 'Biographical Notice' of Jane Austen Henry Austen writes that 'at a very early age she was enamoured of Gilpin on the Picturesque', *NA,* ed. Chapman, p.7.
14 *Loiterer* no. 49 (2 January 1790), p.5.
15. Ibid., p. 10.
16. *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen,* pp.51-52.
17. MS by James Austen, HRO 23M93/60/1/1. ff.1-2.
18. *NA,* ed. Chapman, p.111.
19. MS by James Austen, HRO 23M93/60/1/1, f.3.
20. Ibid., ff.6-8.
21. Ibid., ff.13-14.
22. Quoted in Maggie Lane, *Jane Austen's England* (London, 1986), p.38.
23. MS by James Austen, HRO 23M93/60/1/1, f.15.
24. *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen*, p.54
25. Ibid., p.55.
26. James Austen, 'Morning: To Edward' (1814), 11.171-88, HRO 23M93/60/3/1.

Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth

Chris Viveash

When Jane Austen's aunt, Mrs Jane Leigh Perrot, was acquitted of shoplifting, at Taunton Assizes on Saturday 29th March 1800, after a humiliating seven months spent on remand at Ilchester gaol, one of the first congratulatory letters received by Mr and Mrs Leigh Perrot was from Ireland, written by an emotional Richard Lovell Edgeworth:

'I do not think that I ever felt so much astonishment or indignation... Among my numerous friends and acquaintance if there was a couple whom I could have selected as the farthest removed from being the objects of such a villainous attack it would have been yourselves! . . I trouble you, my Dear Sir, with a few lines to express the deep sense that I have of regard and esteem for you and the amiable partner of your happiness; for so many as thirty-four years we have been acquainted, and during that time I do not think that I have met any man of such singularly nice feelings of honour and justice. . . with tears in my eyes I sat down to write to you.'[1]

Mr Edgeworth and the Leigh Perrots had been neighbours in the village of Hare Hatch, in Berkshire, when the Edgeworths moved to the area in 1766. Mr Leigh Perrot helped with Richard Lovell Edgeworth's scientific experiments, which included telegraphing from Hare Hatch to Nettlebed by means of windmills. Maria Edgeworth, Richard's daughter, was born in 1768 whilst the family still lived at Hare Hatch. Maria's early upbringing was disrupted by Richard's frequent absences from home, and a coolness towards Maria's mother whom Richard had married in haste, later repenting his youthful infatuation. A vigorous man, Richard Lovell Edgeworth was to marry four times, begetting twenty-two children!

Maria Edgeworth shared the early promise of Jane Austen and it is interesting to note the two writers' parallel tastes in literature. Maria moved to Ireland in 1782 with her father and his third wife Elizabeth, in order that he might run more efficiently the family estate which he had inherited. Once the family had settled, Richard Edgeworth set Maria the task of translating into English the whole of *Adèle et Théodore,* by Madame de Genlis, a favourite novel of Jane Austen. In *Emma*, when Mrs Weston, Emma's former governess, gives birth to a baby girl, Emma remarks 'She has had the advantage, you know, of practising on me, like La Baronne d'Almane on La Comtesse d'Ostalis, in Madame de Genlis' *Adelaide and Theodore,* and we shall now see her own little Adelaide educated on the perfect plan'. Maria Edgeworth was just fourteen when she embarked upon the translation of *Adèle et Théodore,* little dreaming that she would meet Madame de Genlis twenty-one years later, in 1803, in her austere apartments at the Arsenal, in Paris. The old lady was by then embittered and forsaken; her sour comments and sharply pointed features left Maria and her father with an unfortunate impression of the distinguished writer.[2]

'I almost envy them the pleasure of reading Clementina's history for the first

time. It is one of those pleasures which is never repeated in life', wrote Maria Edgeworth of Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison,* a novel which Jane Austen had so skilfully adapted as a play for family entertainment, in the years up to 1800. Maria knew the Richardson novel quite as well as Jane; for example, during her travels on the continent Maria describes six Belgian horses as having 'tails long enough to please Sir Charles Grandison himself'. Harry Ormond declares, in Maria's masterly Irish novel *Ormond,* that *'Sir Charles Grandison* did him more good than any other fiction he ever read in his life'.[3]

The genteel influence of Charlotte Smith was appreciated by both Maria and Jane. 'Have you seen *Minor Morals,* by Mrs Smith? There is a beautiful little poem called the "Calendar of Flora",' wrote Maria Edgeworth to her cousin Sophy Ruxton in 1800. Jane Austen had also read Charlotte Smith's children's book, *Minor Morals,* published in 1798 (probably at Godmersham with her young nephews and nieces clustered around her). Jane copied out 'The Calendar of Flora', in longhand, as it listed, in laboured rhyme, the native British flora and fauna; Jane's manuscript copy of the turgid poem is, happily, still extant.[4]

Elizabeth Hamilton's *The Cottagers of Glenburnie,* Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* and Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* were also shared joys, and one might conclude that *most* young ladies of the period probably enjoyed these works; however, the singularity of Maria and Jane both praising the sensible Captain Sir Charles William Pasley's *Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire* puts them apart from other young women of that time. Jane, in her letters to her sister, sighs over the perceptive captain; whilst Maria, in her novel *The Absentee,* notes that it 'leaves a strong impression on the mind'.[5]

Tom Lefroy, the lively, handsome Irish youth from Jane Austen's teenage years at Steventon, was also appreciated, as a mature friend, by Miss Edgeworth. Maria became known as the lady who 'was a great friend of Judge Lefroy', as Tom was known in later years. The son of Judge Lefroy remembers her 'running through the great drawing room doors to greet the Judge' at his home, Carrigglass Manor, Longford, in Ireland.[6]

In the year 1801 Maria Edgeworth published a novel which was to establish her as a leading writer of that period: *Belinda* was an astonishing, if rather lengthy, work, but the reading public (including Jane Austen) took Belinda Portman to their hearts. In that same year, 1801, Jane Austen had to endure the distress, both physical and mental, of moving to Bath with her parents, and worse, staying with the Leigh Perrots, which meant *having* to attend Mrs Leigh Perrot's dull evening parties. Conceivably, the subject of Miss Edgeworth's new society novel was discussed, as the Leigh Perrots would have remembered her as a small, but highly intelligent child. Depressing news for Jane, whose own publishing career now languished; 'Susan' was now lying in a drawer until a publisher could be found who would not refuse her, as Cadell and Davies had done, in 1797, when they rejected her other work, 'First Impressions'. Jane Austen had chosen Cadell and Davies, as her name, together with Maria Edgeworth's, had appeared in the subscription list at the front

of Fanny Burney's novel, *Camilla,* which was published by Cadell and Davies in 1796.

Years later Jane had the vicarious pleasure of dragging *Belinda* into the revised version of 'Susan' *(Northanger Abbey);* when describing Catherine and Isabella's burgeoning friendship, Jane Austen expands her narrative flow with a satirical discussion on the merits of novel-reading, mocking Maria Edgeworth's lofty disclaimer at the beginning of *Belinda* Jane wrote: ' "And what are you reading ?" "Oh, it is only a novel. It is only *Cecilia,* or *Camilla,* or *Belinda;* or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, . . . the liveliest effusions of wit and humour are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language." '[7] Maria Edgeworth's wording of the 'Advertisement' prefacing *Belinda* (which occasioned Jane's scorn) included the following statement: 'Every author has a right to give what appellation he may think proper to his works . . . the following work is offered to the public as a Moral Tale, the author not wishing to acknowledge a Novel.' When *Northanger Abbey* was published in 1818, Maria Edgeworth ignored the obvious jibe against her and merely commented 'The behaviour of the General in *Northanger Abbey,* packing off the young lady without a servant or the common civilities which any bear of a man, not to say a gentleman, would have shown, is quite outrageously out of drawing and out of nature'; to another correspondent she dismissed *Northanger Abbey* as 'milk and water'.[8]

In 1811, when Jane Austen had at last managed to get *Sense and Sensibility* published, Maria was already in her stride, fêted by the public for *Castle Rackrent, Leonora* and *Tales of Fashionable Life.* In May of that year Maria wrote to her cousin, 'I am going on with *Patronage,* and wish I could show it to you'. By October she was in trouble with the novel: 'I am working away at *Patronage* but cannot at all come up to my idea of what it should be'. The novel was finally published in 1814, when Jane Austen wrote to Cassandra with this reproof: 'It was one of my vanities, like your not reading *Patronage'.* Although it was criticised as being too long, and too didactic, Jane had obviously read the novel and liked it, expecting Cassandra to have read it also. Subscribers to the Chawton circulating library had passed *Tales from Fashionable Life* about the parish,[9] successfully; *perhaps* they had invested in a copy of *Patronage.*

Christmas 1814 saw excitement in the Edgeworth household as the family enjoyed *Mansfield Park,* despite Maria having headaches and '*pins* in my bones'. 'We have been much entertained with *Mansfield Park,*' she enthused. Indeed, the family took turns to read the novel through, as was the custom at Edgeworthstown. Maria was still quoting from the novel in 1823: 'Be pleased, therefore, to go back to Moulinan, and see us eat luncheon; for in spite of Mr. Grant's contempt of these bon-vivant details, habit will not allow me to depart from my practice of giving the bill of fare' – a direct allusion to Dr Grant's 'We none of us want to hear the bill of fare'.[10] Maria would not have appreciated the comments of the first Earl of Dudley on *Mansfield Park:* 'She [Jane Austen] has not so much fine humour as your friend Maria Edgeworth, but she is more skilful in contriving a story, she has a great deal more feeling, and never plagues you with chemistry, mechanics,

or political economy.' Maria's father was a strong influence in her composition; sometimes his didactic voice was too evident. Lady Anne Romilly wrote to Maria, before the family had even read the novel, 'Have you read *Mansfield Park?* It has been pretty generally admired here, and I think all novels must be that are true to life which this is, with a good strong vein of principle running thro' the whole. It has not that elevation of virtue, something beyond nature, that gives the greatest charm to a novel, but still it is real natural every day life, and will amuse an idle hour in spite of its faults'.[11]

The publication of *Emma* saw presentation copies arriving at the households of the Leigh Perrots, the Prince Regent, the Revd James Stanier Clarke, Lady Morley and the Edgeworths at Edgeworthstown, in Ireland. 'The authoress of *Pride and Prejudice* has been so good as to send me a new novel just published, *Emma'*, wrote an astonished Maria Edgeworth in January 1816. Maria had read *Pride and Prejudice* on the very day that she had visited the Revd James Stanier Clarke's brother, Dr Edward Clarke ('a little, square fussy man') at Cambridge, in May 1813 and had written to her step-brother, Charles Edgeworth, advising him to 'get it directly', she was so very taken with it.[12]

Emma was a subtler novel than *Pride and Prejudice,* leading Maria Edgeworth to complain: 'There was no story to it, except that Miss Emma found that the man whom she designed for Harriet's lover was an admirer of her own – & he was affronted at being refused by Emma . . . and smooth, thin water-gruel is according to Emma's father's opinion a very good thing & it is very difficult to make a cook understand what you mean by smooth thin water gruel !'

Persuasion was greeted at Edgeworthstown with something like approbation: '*Persuasion* – excepting the tangled, useless histories of the family in the first fifty pages – appears to me, especially in all that relates to poor Anne and her lover, to be exceedingly interesting and natural. The love and the lover admirably well drawn; don't you see Captain Wentworth or rather don't you in her place feel, taking the boisterous child off her back as she kneels by the sick boy on the sofa? And is not the first meeting after their long separation admirably well done? And the overheard conversation about the nut? But I must stop; we have got no farther than the disaster of Miss Musgrave's[sic] jumping off the steps.'[13]

Jane Austen always admired Maria Edgeworth. In a letter to Cassandra she wrote: 'I have made up my mind to like no novels really, but Miss Edgeworth's, yours & my own.'[14] Nowadays Maria Edgeworth is almost forgotten; yet both writers were blessed with the gift to increase and advance the prestige of the novel – as an evolving, living literary form, in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Notes

1. W. & R.A. Austen-Leigh, *Jane Austen, Her Life and Letters* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1913), p. 139.
2. Augustus Hare (ed.), *The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1895), Vol 1, pp. 132-140.

3. Maria Edgeworth, *Ormond* (London: Macmillan, 1895), p. 82.
4. Hare, p. 72.
5. Maria Edgeworth, *The Absentee* (London: Macmillan, 1895), p. 216.
6. Anne Thackeray Ritchie, (Introduction), *The Absentee* (London: Macmillan, 1895), p. xi.
7. Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford: 1923, 1987), p. 38.
8. Marilyn Butler, *Maria Edgeworth, A literary life* (Oxford: 1972), p. 445.
9. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford: 1997), p. 206.
10. Hare, Vol 2, p. 455.
11. David Gilson, *A Bibliography of Jane Austen* (Oxford: 1982), p.50.
12. Hare, Vol 1, pp. 216-218.
13. Hare, Vol 1, pp. 260-261.
14. Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters,* p. 278.

Jane Austen and Charles Lamb

H.R. Harris

Jane Austen and Charles Lamb were both born in 1775, so they were exact contemporaries. There is no evidence that they ever met, or even knew of each other. But in 1811 their literary careers crossed in a single month: October. Looking back on it, October 1811 was for both of them the most important month of their lives. In this month Jane Austen published her first novel, with all that this implies. And Lamb, after minor publications and a failed play, fell on his feet as an essayist with a series of highly competent pieces in Leigh Hunt's magazine the *Reflector*. The culmination of this work was his famous essay 'On the Tragedies of Shakespeare', published in the Oct./Dec. issue. [1]

There is strong circumstantial evidence to suggest that Austen saw this essay, and that it influenced her next book: *Mansfield Park*. To understand how this might have come about, we need to go back a little, and follow events leading up to 1811. One of Lamb's friends was the poet Robert Southey. In 1808 Jane Austen's close friend Catherine Bigg married the Revd Herbert Hill, an uncle of Southey. Jane Austen's letters show that she knew of this marriage, and that as from 1808 she was reading Southey and commenting on him.[2] We can therefore infer an interest on her part in Southey and his circle as from 1808. In late 1810 Leigh Hunt - another of Lamb's friends - launched the *Reflector* and Lamb became one of its principal contributors. In May 1811 Jane Austen stayed with Catherine Bigg (now Hill) at the latter's home in Streatham.[3] This is a key event. One can infer a discussion of the Hills' relation (Southey), of Southey's circle (including Lamb and Leigh Hunt), and of the recently launched magazine. Thus Jane Austen could have been alerted to the existence of the *Reflector* some six months before the appearance of Lamb's essay, and would have taken a particular interest in the Oct./Dec. issue, since publication of a new novel (in this case *Sense and Sensibility)* directs attention to periodicals and reviews.

As originally published, the essay did not have the short title by which it is now known. Instead Lamb gave it the weird and rambling title 'Theatralia No. 1 - On Garrick and Acting; and the Plays of Shakespeare, considered with reference to their fitness for Stage Representation'. With hindsight, we can see that this title, beginning with references to the theatre and acting, was relevant to an idea (the acting sequence in *Mansfield Park*) then taking shape in Jane Austen's mind. Thus we can imagine her being drawn to such an essay by the title. Once into it, she would have found a number of points curiously relevant to herself. In the opening pages there is a disparaging remark about Richardson's *Clarissa* and the epistolary novel. Since Richardson was Jane Austen's favourite novelist, and since *Sense and Sensibility* was originally written in letter-form, such a remark might well have offended her in October 1811. Lamb then develops his central theme: that acting is only a medium, and gets in the way of the work of art that Shakespeare produced. This would not have pleased her either, with her youthful love of amateur dramatics and adult enjoyment of the theatre. In the last paragraph Lamb actually refers to 'the Amateurs of the Theatre' and acknowledges that they will have found the length of his essay 'obnoxious'.[4] If Jane Austen did see this essay, it would have made a very definite impression.

In terms of *Mansfield Park* there are matching ideas, but differences of treatment, as if Jane Austen were intent on putting a contrary view. Lamb deals at length with the subject of acting, and its effect on an audience. Jane Austen devotes seven chapters to the rehearsing of a play, and its effect on the actors. Lamb deplores the practice of making schoolboys read Shakespeare aloud, arguing that the constant repetition of well-known speeches from elocution books, such as Enfield's *Speaker*, has completely deadened their effect. Jane Austen by contrast has Edmund Bertram and Henry Crawford bemoaning the lack of reading aloud by schoolboys. They cannot both be right, and when we read that 'Fanny was listening again with great entertainment' we get a hint of what is going on. Lamb is actually right, Jane Austen is poking fun at him, and Fanny is being used as a Chorus to point this out to the reader. Lamb proceeds to a detailed discussion of *King Lear*, arguing that the play is 'essentially impossible to be represented on a stage', and savagely condemns 'the tamperings with it' (i.e. Tate's revised version with its happy ending in which Cordelia survives and marries Edgar). Jane Austen proceeds (so to speak) to follow the plot and characterisation of *Lear* extremely closely – for example Fanny and Edmund stand for Cordelia and Edgar – but she discards the high tragedy of Shakespeare, and in allowing Fanny to marry Edmund positively embraces Tate's happy ending.[5]

A further connecting point with this essay is the reference in Chapter 10 of *Mansfield Park* to 'Quarterly Reviews'. It is usually assumed that this refers to the magazine of that name. However the plural form suggests another interpretation: that the reference was prompted by a recent reading of the *Reflector* (itself a quarterly), and was originally intended to be a generic term, without capitals, rather than a specific one. The generic term reads more naturally in the context: 'they all returned to the house together, there to lounge away the time as they could with

sofas, and chit-chat, and quarterly reviews'.

Nowadays Lamb is unfashionable, so perhaps it is only fair to let him have the last word. Commenting on *Hamlet* he says: 'I am not arguing that Hamlet should not be acted, but how much *Hamlet* is made another thing by being acted'. This provides the perfect answer to all the TV and film adaptations of the Austen books. These adaptations may be good – even extremely good – but they are 'another thing'.

Notes

1. See J. E. Morpurgo, *Charles Lamb & Elia* (Carcanet, 1993), for the full text of this essay.
2. D. Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (London, 1995), Letters 56 & 59.
3. D. Le Faye, ed., Letters 70 & 71.
4. *Reflector* wording: 'obnoxious'. Later editions: 'distasteful'.
5. See Margaret Kirkham, *Jane Austen, Feminism and Fiction* (Athlone, 1997), 112-114, for a discussion of the parallels between *Mansfield Park* and *King Lear* .

The Moor, the Admiral, his fiancée and a night at the Opera

Victor Lucas

When Jane's brother, Captain Francis Austen, proposed to and was accepted by Mary Gibson, a fair-haired cheerful girl, practical and resilient, early in February 1804, it is said to have been at Covent Garden Theatre.[1] They did not marry until almost two and a half years later, and it was during this rather lengthy engagement that on 15 October 1805 Frank wrote to his fiancée from the *Canopus*, at sea off Gibraltar:

> The last evening of our stay at Gibraltar we went, after dining with the General, to see 'Othello' performed by some of the officers of the garrison. The theatre is small but very neatly fitted up.... I hardly need add that the evening was not quite so productive of pleasure to me as the last theatrical representation I had witnessed, which was at Covent Garden some time in the beginning of February last when I had the honour of being seated by a fair young lady with whom I became slightly acquainted the preceding year at Ramsgate.' He continues, rather archly, 'Do you happen to recollect anything of that evening? I think you do and that you will not readily forget it.[2]

Frank was stationed at Ramsgate from July 1803 until spring of the following year,[3] involved in organizing the coastal defences against an anticipated French

invasion. It was a time of much patriotic fervour. The Sea Fencibles, the Home Guard of the time, were being drilled and marched along the cliffs; beacons were ready to be lit to give the alarm should the French attempt a landing, a threat which would not be lifted until after the Battle of Trafalgar. It was during a month's leave towards the end of this assignment that Frank had taken Mary to the theatre in London, soon after which he would be returning to an active seagoing appointment as captain of the 50-gun ship *Leopard*, assisting in the blockade of Boulogne. One wonders what he may have taken her to see at Covent Garden in February 1804 – having matrimony in mind.

He does not give the precise date of the visit in his letter to Mary but on February 3rd, as on other evenings that month, Covent Garden was presenting 'Othello', with John Philip Kemble in the title role. It could be readily assumed that the performance of that selfsame play in Gibraltar prompted Frank's recollection of the earlier occasion. But this particular play, with its theme of marital infidelity and obsessive sexual jealousy, can hardly have been the ideal choice for a young naval officer with an intent to pop the question. There is an interesting alternative possibility.

It may not have been the play but simply the unaccustomed experience of being in a theatre again which led Frank to write to Mary in 1805 and reminisce. On two other evenings 'in the beginning of February'– Thursday Feb 2nd and Saturday Feb 11th – the Covent Garden stage was occupied by an entertaining and light-hearted musical attraction, immensely popular with audiences, which was surely more suited to the occasion, and to Frank's purpose. This was a nautical comic opera in three acts by Thomas Dibdin entitled *The English Fleet in 1342*, with those splendid singers Ann Storace and John Braham, the latter having also composed the overture and much of the incidental music.

Thomas Dibdin was the son of Charles Dibdin, whose many songs of the sea were great favourites with sailors and public alike. It was said that they had brought more men to the service than all the press gangs had managed to do, and had sustained them through storms, shipwrecks, battles with the enemy, and all the many other dangers and discomforts which beset them in their perilous calling. The younger Dibdin was following in the footsteps of his father when he wrote this lively nautical entertainment, advertised on the bills as containing 'Songs, Duetts, Chorusses, Glees, etcetera.' There were also rustic dances, hornpipes, and an abundance of stirring patriotic lines guaranteed to produce applause:

> The genius of Britain is wedded to the sea - and the ships are their children! All the world knows what an English Fleet is - there's nothing on the Continent can possibly equal it!
>
> March forward! We'll meet 'em, attack 'em, and beat 'em who threaten the rights of our land to invade!

In the audience, Frank may well have held Mary's hand as the young sailor Valentine sang to his wife Kitty of his love for the sea - but also of his love for her:

> For foreign climes to cross the sea
> I joyful left my native cot,

And o'er the billows sang with glee,
Unmindful of my future lot.
Till love – a softer name for fate –
To other themes transformed my ditty.
Then all my song was 'Bonny Kate!'
And all its burthen 'Lovely Kitty'.
Oh...! Sweet Kitty!

There was a comic bosun, Matt Mainmast, with a rousing song which had the whole theatre joining in the refrain:

British sailors have a knack
(Haul away... Yeo ho boys!)
Of pulling down a Frenchman's jack
Gainst any odds you know boys.
Come three to one, right sure am I
If we can't beat 'em still we'll try
To make old England's colours fly!
(Haul away... Yeo ho boys !)

And when the curtain rose on the final scene it revealed, to cheers and clapping, an elaborate tableau calling on the full resources of the great theatre. The prompt book described 'The English Fleet at anchor, with splendid banners flying, the decks and shrouds manned and armed in the appropriate English style. A Grand March plays while the English Admiral is received in all military pomp.' Matt Mainmast came forward again with another patriotic song:

From the days of old Edward France never could whack us,
Though often they've tried and as often were beat.
And now we've Hibernia and Scotia to back us
Tis nonsense to threaten the English Fleet!

After which the full company joined in a stirring finale:

When the foe has retreated, by valour defeated,
Our wishes completed, all danger forgot,
There'll be through the Nation such jollification
With grand 'lumination and I don't know what!
And then in the middle of tabor and fiddle,
Each night how we'll frolic and foot it away![4]

The future Admiral Sir Francis Austen, KCB, was not a man to leave anything to chance when planning an engagement – of whatever nature. One would like to think that this exuberant entertainment, and not the marital misfortunes of the Moor of Venice, is what he took Mary to at Covent Garden.

Notes

1. See Maggie Lane's *Jane Austen's Family Through Five Generations* (London, 1984).
2. *Jane Austen's Sailor Brothers* by John and Edith Hubback (London, 1906).
3. Ibid.
4. Published plays were customarily printed from the prompt book, and the full text of

The English Fleet in 1342, with stage directions, is in *Dibdin's Writings* Vol.2 (London 1805), Theatre Museum ref. no. PR4549.D5 .

The Naval Connection

M.C. Hammond

In the spring of 1851 there were gathered at Trincomalee in Burma four members of the extended Austen/Knight family who were all naval officers, serving on the China Station. They represented three generations, and three different families. Admiral Charles Austen, the Commander-in-Chief, was Jane and Cassandra's 'own particular little brother'. His two sons were, or had been, both in the Navy, but were not, at this time, present. Admiral Charles's older brother, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Francis Austen, was now 77 and retired to his house, Portsdown Lodge, near Portsmouth. But his son, also Francis, was there as his uncle's Flag-Captain in H.M.S. *Hastings*. The two other naval officers were great-nephews to the Admiral, two of the ten sons of Elizabeth Austen/Knight; she had married Edward Rice of Kent, and was the happy mother of fifteen children.

The naval connection, which was so significant in Jane Austen's life, as is manifest in her work, was a new element in the Austen family. Though the earlier generations of Austens acquired land and property in Kent, their prosperity was founded on trade. On her mother's side the background was much more aristocratic, with the Church and scholarship engaging many of the members of the family who had not inherited wealth, land or position. The Services were certainly professions appropriate to the gentry and the aristocracy, but not in fact followed hitherto by the Leigh family.

Francis Austen, the fifth son of George and Cassandra Austen, had evidently set his heart on becoming a sailor from earliest boyhood; and on 12th April 1786, when he was just short of his 12th birthday, he was admitted to the Royal Naval College in Portsmouth. His younger brother Charles followed him in July 1791, at the same age. The cost to their father would have been approximately £50 per annum for each boy, a considerable sum, though this included *all* costs: travel, clothing, and other domestic expenses. Their careers have been fully recorded in the Hubbacks' book *Jane Austen's Sailor Brothers* and elsewhere. Both reached the summit of their profession and died universally admired.

Both brothers had sons who followed their fathers into the Navy. Admiral Francis Austen' s son Francis had a successful career culminating in his appointment as Flag-Captain to his Uncle Charles in Burma. At this time, he married his cousin, Charles's daughter Fanny, a successful rival to his younger brother Henry, who

wrote a facetious poem to record his defeat in this fraternal rivalry:
'Not cross, though grieved, not sullen, though dejected,
Yet most annoyed at being thus neglected'[1]
The philosophical Henry, who was a lawyer, died a bachelor in 1854 at the age of 43, and his brother Francis died in 1858 at the age of 49.
Two more of Francis's sons were in the Navy, though not as long-serving as their father. George entered the Navy as a Chaplain, and Herbert Grey, born in 1815, retired with the rank of Captain in 1864, soon after his marriage. These sons of Admiral Francis all had successful careers in the Navy, though they did not achieve the high rank or the length of service of their father and uncle. It seems that at this period, after the French wars were over, it was more usual for a naval officer to retire soon after he was married, provided he could afford to do so. The Church clearly offered a satisfactory harbour. By this time, however, the Navy was becoming an increasingly popular profession for the subsequent generations. Francis's daughter, Mary Jane, married a sailor, George Purvis, and her two sons became distinguished naval officers.
Charles Austen's two sons joined the Navy, and Charles had the pleasure of having both boys (aged 17 and 14) with him in the *Bellerophon* – a rather antiquated vessel commonly known as the Billy Ruffian – at the siege of Acre in 1840. Charles John, the elder son, continued his naval career, marrying in 1848 a lady from Nova Scotia called Sophia de Blois. After his marriage, his subsequent appointments were land-based, as Inspecting Commander in the Coastguard in Ireland and Cornwall and as Naval Agent in charge of Mails. He died suddenly in 1867, at the age of 46. His brother Henry, having served with his father as a 'volunteer' (a sort of junior midshipman), abandoned the Navy in 1843 and at 17, became a soldier, joining the 81st Foot as an ensign. In 1850 he purchased a captaincy in the 73rd Foot. In 1851 his family learned that he had died in Capetown as the result of a fall. He was 25. That there was something disreputable about his death is clear from the comments in the letters exchanged between members of the Rice family, who were cousins of the Austens. George, with his Uncle Charles in Burma, wrote to his brother Cecil:
'I know you have of course heard of poor Henry Austen's death at the Cape under such melancholy circumstances – it has been a dreadful blow to the good old Admiral and it will be long before he gets over it entirely – it was a miserable death to die, certainly – I am very sorry that he did not die in action for his parents' sake. I saw him at the Cape when we were coming out. None of the officers of the 'Rupert' have written a line to the Admiral about it – and all his information has been gathered from the papers. It is odd that the Colonel hasn't written, I think, don't you?'[2]
The attitude of the Rice sons towards their Austen naval cousins was mildly critical, but was based, one suspects, very much on professional jealousy when one or other of them achieved promotion or a favourable posting. Yet it is evident that Charles's family were regarded with less approval than most other relations. One Rice daughter wondered why Uncle Charles did not have more amiable children

– he himself was never referred to without expressions of uncritical affection. One recalls Jane Austen's remark on little Cassie being 'so very Palmer-y'. And Harriet Palmer, who was Charles's sister-in-law and became his second wife after caring for his children for many years, was not liked by the Austen family. Mrs Austen had written, 'Miss Palmer to be sure is not agreeable, but she is very good and very useful.'[3] Other members of the family found her 'plain and sour-countenanced,'[4] vulgar and lacking in charm. Evidently the charm so conspicuous in all the Austens was not inherited by Harriet's sons.

Of the ten sons of Elizabeth Rice (nee Austen/Knight), five went into the Army and three into the Navy. Morland, the scholarly one, went into the Church and was a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Lionel, the youngest, emigrated to Australia and acquired a station in Queensland.

Edward Bridges Rice was the eldest of the Rice family, born in October 1819. From childhood his stubborn intention was to go to sea. By the age of 9 he was at the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth. His resemblance to his great-uncle Francis Austen, the Admiral, was almost uncanny. In physique, personality and in qualities of character they had a great deal in common. Both were short in stature, amongst taller brothers, full of energy and ambition to do well and honourably in their profession, very conscious of their own potential. In his Memoir, written rather formally in the third person, Francis Austen had written: 'being although rather small of stature, of a vigorous constitution and possessing great activity of body, [he] was not long in acquiring a competent knowledge of the practical parts of seamanship to which he was urged by the natural energies of his mind and a general thirst for knowledge, he became in a very short time a very good practical observer which in those days was rather an uncommon thing.'[5] These words could apply equally accurately to either man. Francis's father wrote to him on his first going to sea a letter full of wise counsel and affectionate advice; Edward Rice received a letter from his father too, almost identical in its tone and substance, tendering much the same advice and warnings.

The naval career of Edward Rice followed a traditional course, with the usual anxieties and frustrations concerning promotion and postings. Such vital matters were still affected by the influence of personal contacts and the ability to pull strings in appropriate places; this was one of the reasons for the father, Edward Rice, remaining as Member of Parliament for Dover for such a long period, enabling him to keep in touch with people of power and influence. Edward's progress was eagerly followed by his admiring sisters, who were torn by their ambition for him and their desire to have him safe at home. His sister Marianne wrote a passionate letter to him when he was at Trincomalee: 'how I do utterly hate your being such an immense way off, and in those vile hot climates, *I cannot express* - I really think you ought not to stay out there, to injure your constitution, and I hope and trust you will not do that, for the sake of promotion – I want you very much indeed to get your promotion, and know it is of consequence to you, but *nothing* is of such importance as health, if you are forty post-captains, it would not make up for a liver complaint, and a ruined constitution – even if you were a youngest son and

depended on your profession, I should think it much better not to stay out there if it was bad for your health, but you are the eldest you know, and the staff of the family, and for everybody's sake you ought to take care, – so I *hope* and *beg* and *desire* my dearest Wood, that if you find you keep on not being well, you will settle *bravely* – to come home – I know all the difficulties and trials (as hard to bear in their way as knaves and blockheads and hard work and climate, etc.) of living at home, but I think with several of us together, and with walks to the pointing post, etc. we could get on very nicely – Papa really wants very much a son at home, and you of course are the one that ought to be there – steadfastly and seriously I advise and counsel you to come home and recruit your health and be a comfort to your parents and sisters. There is a very nice Miss Miles with 60,000£ who will do very nicely for you, so make haste:'[6]

Similar fraternal prejudice was expressed by brother Henry, second in age to Edward, and a captain in the 72nd Highland Regiment, stationed in Barbados, in a letter of September 1848:

'I really think that Edward's promotion looks up [illeg.] if old Admiral Bridges really has told Sir Hyde Parker to give him the first opening. As for old Wood (Edward) himself, his constant cheerfulness and patience shd. alone suffice to procure him his promotion. – to talk or think about it only tends to create murderous ideas in one's mind – I have no hope of seeing George – we are out of his beat altogether – I feel quite sure that his quick promotion will put an end to his dislike of his profession, which was fast disappearing previously. I am much softened towards Uncle Frank by it, without at all thinking that it is entirely owing to him – they happened to want Lieuts. in the Navy and so they got George – that was it. I see by the papers that Uncle in his choice between two evils – the promotion of son Herbert or nevvy Charles chose the worst contrary to custom – people generally choose the least – the promotion of either must be an evil as far as Queen Victoria is concerned but that of Uncle Charles' objectionable son is certainly the worst. When I think of Edward I could throttle him as it were a robber. I saw Richard Knight's appointment to Trincomalee and will do all I can to make his mind easy when he comes here. I am glad that the youthful Dick means to amend his ways and I think he will have every opportunity of keeping to his purpose in his present ship.'[7]

This cousin was the son of William and Caroline Knight, born in 1830, and evidently a scapegrace of some sort; his career in the navy must have been short-lived, as he was sent to New Zealand, where he died in 1866.

Edward Rice had gone to sea from Naval College in 1834; he was 14 years old, and did not see his home again for six years. By that time he had acquired three younger brothers and another sister. His career continued prosperously, through the Chinese Opium War of 1839-42, where he earned a medal, as well as a subsequent period of home leave, followed by home duties in Portsmouth. There followed the 'gathering of the Clan' in the East India Station, and the involvement of the two Rice brothers (George was the younger brother) with their great-uncle Charles in the Burma Wars. Both brothers earned mentions for their gallantry in the actions in the Irawaddy River. Neither George nor his Uncle Charles Austen survived this

campaign. Charles, aged 73, and much debilitated by recent attacks of cholera, died at Prome on shipboard in the autumn of 1852. Characteristically, he is said to have written up his reports, penned a line to his wife, said his prayers, took to his bed and died, peacefully and alone. George, wounded in the hand and his health undermined by dysentery and cholera, was invalided home and died surrounded by his family in the spring of 1853. He was 27 years old.

Edward continued the slow but sure climb in his profession. A gallant and independent action against the Riff pirates off the coast of Algiers earned him reward and commendations. He had long wished to marry, and judging from family letters, had met with several refusals. He had courted his popular and pretty cousin Norah Hill, the daughter of Elizabeth Rice's sister Cassandra; other names occurred in the letters, including one of the Russell sisters from Woburn, where Marianne Rice's husband was the incumbent. But in 1842 he married Cecilia Harcourt, whose father had recently inherited the beautiful estate of Nuneham Courtenay near Oxford. One of her brothers was Sir William Harcourt, an influential minister in Gladstone's administration. It was a long and very happy marriage; they had one son, Henry, who succeeded to the estate of Dane Court in E. Kent and spent his life as a farmer and land-owner. Spending long periods of time apart, Ceci and Edward exchanged frequent and very long letters, many of which survive. Those of Edward are of particular interest, describing every aspect of his life on board and on shore, official, technical and social.

In 1875, now a Vice-Admiral, Edward was appointed Superintendent of the Naval Dockyards at Malta, with the additional appointment as second-in-command of the Mediterranean Fleet, commanded by Admiral Drummond. It was a period of great tension in the Eastern Mediterranean, with the Russians threatening the power of the Turks, and the European Powers aligning themselves in opposite camps, the northern powers, Russia, Austria and Germany, against Britain, France and Italy. The British Mediterranean Fleet was despatched to Besika Bay, close to the Dardanelles, to thwart any attempt on Constantinople. With the C-in-C constantly away from the Fleet on diplomatic duties in that city, Edward was sent from Malta to take command of the Fleet. The letters he wrote to Ceci describe his activities in lively detail. He was proud of keeping the ships in a state of constant readiness and efficiently maintained, though he complained about their worn-out condition, with faulty boilers and so on. His social life was described, the entertainment of his junior officers, including his relationship with the son of the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, who was Captain of H.M.S. *Sultan*, and his wife, the daughter of the Czar of Russia; he was a man he liked and admired: a good sailor, an enthusiastic musician and very good company. Edward had plenty of time to exercise on shore, playing tennis, riding, and visiting ancient sites and places of interest. He went to Troy and saw the golden masks from Mycenae which Schliemann had just discovered ('very ugly and negroid', he commented). He visited Mount Athos, where he was mortified to be kissed by the heavily bearded Abbot. He complained bitterly and constantly about the the Admiralty failure to send him a properly equipped flagship, not for his own comfort and convenience, but for the 'Service',

an oft-repeated term.

Edward's last appointment was in charge of the Dockyards at Sheerness, which he and his successor in the post, Prince Ernest of Leiningen,[8] agreed was a good appointment, but a horrible place.

A brother twenty years Edward's junior was the third son to enter the Navy. Ernest was also destined to achieve distinction and rise to the rank of Admiral. He was born in 1840, and started his active career at a very early age, serving as a midshipman in H.M.S. *Odin* in the Gulf of Bothnia in 1854, in the course of the Crimean War. Here he first experienced action, including an episode in which he was in a small boat attempting a landing which came under heavy fire. A sailor pulled him up from where he had been thrust to the bottom of the boat, saying, 'Come on, Sir, you are the senior officer here now!'

Ernest was soon recognised as an able technical officer, and became a gunnery specialist. Lord John Hay recorded of him that 'he had very good French, a very able man in any sphere of life, much above the average.'[9]

His versatility was well employed, not only his technical expertise but his skill as an administrator and diplomat. He was gunnery officer in H.M.S. *Duncan* in I866, and was employed also on a commission sent to Jamaica to enquire into the handling of a rebellion of native Jamaicans; Governor Eyre was said to have quelled the rising with unnecessary severity, trying and executing the ringleaders, including the popular and charismatic leader, a wealthy mulatto preacher.

Ernest married in 1868, Laura York, a sister of his brother Morland's wife; for a while he was able to set up house and start a family, as Director of Naval Ordnance. In 1874 he was in command of H.M.S. *Albatross* and about to leave England for four years. His extended cruise took him round the shores of South America, from Rio through the Magellan Straits, and up to Panama, with long periods cruising along the coastlines of Chile and Peru; and thence to the shores of the United States and Canada, to Vancouver Island and south to California and Mexico. His duties seemed to be light, consisting of defending the rights of British citizens in the area, showing a British naval presence, and settling disputes which arose on board merchant vessels, such as a mutiny arising from an unduly severe commanding officer. There were occasions when a show of British 'gun-boat diplomacy' was proved to be efficacious and economical, in lives, time and expense. Approaching a port where local riots had broken out, he fired a warning salvo over the town, upon which the rioters took to the hills, and were no more heard of. Ernest enjoyed rescuing the deposed President of Panama, in a cloak-and-dagger operation where the official had to masquerade as one of Ernest's 'drunken' crew, and he enjoyed even more entertaining the new President on board, knowing that the deposed one was in hiding below decks. For long periods he would visit British residents in Callao in Peru, or Coquimbo in Chile, where he enjoyed dizzying climbs in the mountainous interior, and energetic hunting expeditions. The latter were not only a major pleasure, but made very important additions to his crew's diet. Ernest and his fellow-officers hunted everything from whales to the wild cattle which he found on Juan Fernandez, the island of Robinson Crusoe, which he visited; in

his Journal he described how he galloped wildly after the cattle, whirling a lasso round his head like a Red Indian.

On his return to England, Ernest received longed-for promotion to full Captain, and his next assignment was a semi-diplomatic post, based in Paris, as Naval Attaché in Europe. He was able to have his wife with him, and earned the approval of the Foreign Office for his 'judicious conduct' and his 'energy and ability', particularly with the negotiations relating to the Suez Canal.[10]

In 1892, as Captain of H.M.S. *Salamis*, Ernest was in the Mediterranean engaged in active service against Egypt under the tyrannical Khedive Ismael. After taking part in the bombardment of Alexandria, Ernest, from his base in Ismailia, decided to join the staff of General Garnett Wolseley, 'in my semi-official capacity as Commissioner',[11] in the final defeat of the Khedive at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. He described the events of the following two or three days in graphic detail in a long letter to his wife. His role was as an observer, but he spent most of his time succouring the wounded, galloping about delivering messages, and observing the progress of events. 'We had been 52 hours away from the ship,' he reported, 'without taking our clothes off, and a more eventful time I think I never passed in my life.'[12]

Two events blighted Ernest's otherwise exemplary career. He managed to run his vessel, H.M.S. *Iris*, aground on the Avola Shoal, near Sicily, and for this he received a reprimand. There was no loss of life or serious damage, but his sister Fanny, Countess of Winchelsea, dubbed him 'ground Rice', which became his family nickname. A later event was more serious. In March 1889 Ernest was bringing his ship, the *Sultan,* into Malta harbour, when he struck an uncharted rock and the ship sank. No lives were lost, and it was generally believed that no blame could be attached to the Captain, who was relying on faulty charts; but the blow was overwhelming, grief for the loss of his ship combined with chagrin at the damage to his professional pride. To everyone's surprise, the ensuing court-martial found Ernest guilty of an 'Error of Judgement' and issued a reprimand.

Although Ernest never had another command at sea, he was still very much on the active list, in more administrative and advisory capacities. His last appointment was as Admiral Superintendent at Portsmouth, where he supervised the building of three new battleships. More importantly for the younger members of his family, they were able to join in the festivities and parties, the regattas and naval displays which celebrated the Queen's Jubilee of 1897.

It seemed that the family naval tradition was to be continued in the career of Ernest's youngest child and only son. In 1914 he was already a naval officer, and reputed to be exceptionally gifted. But just before the outbreak of the First World War, he was drowned in a seaplane accident near Calshot.

Thus we see that the naval element in the Austen and related families developed through successive generations, and was strong and successful. It was a profession dangerous whether in peace or war, poorly paid, full of hardship and uncertainties, and demanding a vast range of skills and strengths; which demanded stoicism too and sacrifice from all members of the sailor's family, as well as himself. How

much Jane Austen understood all of this is revealed in her letters and in the pages of *Persuasion*, and how highly she esteemed the profession is seen in the ardent words with which she finished the final chapter, in praise of those 'belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance.'[13]

Notes

1. Diana and David Hopkinson, 'Catherine Hubback. A Life'.
2. Rice Family Papers. Courtesy of H.J.B. Rice Esq.
3. Letter from Mrs Austen to Anna Lefroy, 24 December 1814.. Cited by D. Le Faye, *Jane Austen: A Family Record* (London, 1989).
4. James Edward Austen-Leigh to Caroline, his sister, 28 May 1865. Cited by D. Le Faye, as above.
5. F.W. Austen's Memoir, cited by D. Le Faye, as above, and elsewhere.
6. Marianne Rice to Edward Rice, 18 June 1852. Rice Family Papers.
7. Captain Henry Rice, from Barbados to his mother Elizabeth Rice, 1 September 1848. Rice Family Papers.
8. Prince Ernest of Leiningen was a half-nephew of Queen Victoria. He had been an enthusiastic admirer of George Rice when he was a midshipman, and had followed him from ship to ship. As an officer George was always most attentive to the welfare of the midshipmen.
9. Rice Family Papers.
10. Marcia Rice, 'The Rices of Dane Court' (April 1953) unp.
11. Admiral Edward Rice to his wife Ceci, July 1892. Rice Family Papers.
12. ibid.
13. Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, ed. R.W. Chapman, OUP 3rd ed. (1933), p. 252.

John Hubback

Robin Vick

Catherine, daughter of Sir Francis Austen and authoress of a version of *The Watsons* called *The Younger Sister*, married John Hubback in 1849. John (born at Berwick on Tweed in 1811) was a clever young lawyer who published in 1844 *Evidence of Succession to Real and Personal Property and Peerages*. In 1847, however, he suffered a mental breakdown; for several years the family moved from one resort to another in the hope of effecting his recovery but in 1850 it became necessary to place him in an asylum (see Maggie Lane, *Jane Austen's Family*, 1984, pp. 231-2).

John Hubback died at Brislington House near Bristol but this seems not to have been his first refuge. The 1851 census of Brislington shows no 'JH' among the inmates (who were invariably identified in census returns by their initials). The 1851

census for West Brook House Lunatic Asylum, High Street, Alton (Public Record Office HO 107/1679 f 92p38) run by Dr Charles M. Burnett, however, included among the list of patients 'JH' , a married barrister aged 39 born at Berwick on Tweed; this must surely have been John Hubback. How long he remained at Alton, or where he went next, is unknown. There is no JH at either West Brook House or Brislington House in the 1861 census.

Leonora Austen

Deirdre Le Faye

It has been known for some decades that Jane's father, the Revd George Austen, originally had three sisters.[1] The eldest, Hampson, born and buried at Tonbridge, lived only from 1728-30; the middle girl, Philadelphia (1730-92) is known to Austenian scholars as the wife of the East India Company surgeon and merchant Tysoe Saul Hancock, and the mother of Eliza Hancock, later the Comtesse de Feuillide; but of the youngest, Leonora, there is only the record of her baptism at Tonbridge in the winter of 1732/33, and a brief mention of her in one of Hancock's letters from India in 1770. What then happened to Leonora, and why has even her death date remained unknown? Building on information already to hand regarding George Austen's childhood, and with the addition of some further notes made by R. A. Austen-Leigh, a suggested outline of Leonora's obscure life can now be given.

It is noticeable that Leonora was baptised on 25th January 1732/33, and that her mother Rebecca Austen died a fortnight later, on 6th February. It may therefore have been a difficult birth which left Leonora brain-damaged; if this were indeed the case, it could well account for the blankness in Austen family records regarding her life – in sharp distinction to the close contact kept up by George with Philadelphia, as evidenced by their surviving letters.[2] When their father, William Austen of Tonbridge, died in December 1737, his second wife Susanna Kelk refused to accept responsibility for the three surviving children, who were then sent off to London to live with their uncle Stephen Austen (1703-50). He was in business as a bookseller and publisher at the sign of the 'Angel and Bible' in St Paul's Churchyard, and was married with one small son, so must have seemed the best person in the Austen family to take care of the little orphans. However, as George remembered and told his descendants in after years, Stephen resented the charge and made the orphans unwelcome. George was sent back to Tonbridge to live with his Austen aunt Mrs Betty Hooper, and Philadelphia was sent to live with the Freeman family

of maternal cousins.[3] There is no word of Leonora's fate; Claire Tomalin, in her recent biography of Jane Austen, surmises that she may eventually have been employed as a companion – 'that lowest resource of a penniless gentlewoman'.[4] However, a complicated trail of marriages, deaths and re-marriages amongst the fraternity of London booksellers suggests instead that the unfortunate Leonora was a charitable burden, passed like a parcel from one business connection to the other; furthermore, the banking accounts of both George and Philadelphia, in later years, show payments that were probably for her upkeep.

As noted above, Stephen Austen died in 1750, and later that year his widow Elizabeth married John Hinton, a bookseller in business at 34 Paternoster Row, nearby St Paul's. It seems she took Leonora with her to this second marriage, despite the fact that there was no blood relationship between them, and that Leonora lived in the Hinton household until at least Elizabeth's death in 1769, supported in probably quite some degree of comfort by payments from Philadelphia Hancock and her husband. It is in Mr Hancock's letter from Calcutta to his wife, dated 17th January 1770, and written obviously after hearing from Philadelphia the news of Mrs Hinton's death, that there occurs the only mention of Leonora by name in the Austen family record: 'I think Mr. Hinton has behaved very nobly to poor Leonora for he certainly has not the Least Obligation to do anything for her. My Parts shall be always done by her with great Chearfulness, I am not the least Surprized that Mrs. Hinton left nothing to Her.'[5]

In 1772 John Hinton married again, a Miss Sarah Ivatt, and Leonora seems to have remained in the Hinton household until probably 1778. John Hinton died in 1781, and the next year his widow Sarah married another bookseller, the significantly named Stephen Austen Cumberlege (1747-1828) – probably a godson of Leonora's deceased uncle – who took over the 34 Paternoster Row premises along with the widow,[6] and who may already have been giving a home to Leonora since 1778.

It is from that year (1778) that the Hoare's Bank accounts of both Mrs Hancock and the Revd George Austen show regular and quite large payments to various members of the Cumberlege family – Stephen Austen, Elizabeth, and John. In 1778 Mrs Hancock paid them a total of £55, the following year £50, and £40 in each of the years 1780-81-82. Mr Austen paid the Cumberleges the smaller odd amounts of £25.3s. in 1781, £45.19s. in 1782, £23.7s. in 1783, and finally £12.4s. in 1784.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1784 under date 9th November, has the obituary entry: 'Suddenly, Mrs. Cumberlege, wife of Mr. Stephen Austen C., of Islington, and formerly relict of the late Mr. Hinton the bookseller'. A check of the registers for St Mary's Islington shows the burials of several members of the Cumberlege family from 1766 onwards; and, quite precisely, that Leonora Austen, age 49, was buried on 4th February 1783. Mr Austen's last smaller payment in 1784 must have been the settlement of outstanding bills, possibly for her funeral.

As Leonora lived out a reasonable lifespan – reasonable for the eighteenth century, at least – and was dependent upon her siblings for upkeep while yet apparently unable to communicate with them, the assumption must be that she

suffered from some form of physical or mental handicap, perhaps, as suggested above, a brain injury at birth.

Notes

1. R. A. Austen-Leigh, *Pedigree of Austen,* privately printed, Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd (London 1940); see also George Holbert Tucker, *A Goodly Heritage* (Carcanet 1983), reissued as *A History of Jane Austen's Family* (Sutton 1998), p. 22-23.
2. R. A. Austen-Leigh, ed., *Austen Papers 1794-1856* (privately printed, Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd, 1942), pp 22-33, 39-82, 85-178.
3. Deirdre Le Faye, *Jane Austen, a Family Record* (London 1989), p. 3.
4. Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen, a Life* (London 1997), pp. 14, 16.
5. *Austen Papers 1794-1856,* pp. 43-44.
6. *Notes and Queries,* 22nd June 1935, p 444; and 27th July 1935, p 68.

Notes on Sales 1998

Christine Penney

Manuscripts

For the first time for some years there are manuscript sales to report. A sumptuous catalogue from Simon Finch (no. 35) provided a rare opportunity to acquire one of Jane Austen's letters. Item 3 was the letter to Cassandra dated 28 December [1798] announcing Frank Austen's promotion ('Frank is made'). This is no. 16 in the Chapman and Le Faye editions. The price was £22,500. An earlier Simon Finch catalogue (no. 33) offered (item 8) two albums of manuscript music, allegedly written out by Jane Austen, two of her sisters-in-law (Edward's wife Elizabeth and Henry's wife Eliza) and two of her nieces (Fanny and Lizzy Knight), with material in three other unidentified hands, dated 1798-1835. The first, with paper watermarked 1798-1804, was described as being in the hands of all those mentioned above; the second (watermarked 1818) was entirely in the hand of Lizzy Knight. Both were bound in modern half black morocco, vol 2 having an old red morocco label lettered in gilt 'Songs, duetts and glees'. These albums were apparently rediscovered some 15 years ago by Henry Rice, who is descended from Lizzy. The asking price was £21,000.

First and early editions

Sense and Sensibility

Lot 143 in the Phillips sale on 12 June was a first edition, 1811 (Gilson A1), with the half-titles, ownership signature of M[iss] Furse on the title-pages, in contemporary half calf, spines defective. The estimate was £3,000-£3,500, vastly exceeded by the hammer price of £9,200. The copy mentioned in my last report (Simon Finch catalogue 30) reappeared as item [5] in his catalogue 34, at the same price of £11,500. Another copy was item 9 in Maggs's catalogue 1264, for

the amazing price of £14,000. This, though lacking the half-titles and preliminary and terminal blanks and having slight spotting throughout, was described as a good copy in a full mottled calf binding by Zaehnsdorf of about 1910. A copy of the second edition, 1813 (Gilson A2) was lot 308 in the Christie's sale of Sir Brian MacKenna's library on 20 November. Lacking half-titles and final blanks, this was bound in contemporary green half calf, gilt. The estimate was £1,000-£1,500 and the hammer price £2,200. Sotheby's had another copy at lot 123 in their sale of 17 December, again without half-titles and final blanks, in 19th-century limp red morocco. Estimated at £1,500-£2,000, this failed to sell. Maggs's catalogue 1247 had a copy for £3,000 (item 9). Without half-titles, and with the final blank in vol. 3 only, this bore the ownership signatures of Logan Pearsall Smith in all vols and of Robert Gathorne-Hardy in vol. 1. The binding was modern pale brown calf over early marbled boards, spines in gilt and with maroon and green leather labels. The copy of the first American edition of 1833 (Gilson B6), mentioned in my last report, reappeared in Ian Hodgkins's catalogue 103 (item 26) for the same price of £2,500. Richard Bentley's 1833 edition (Gilson D1) was offered as part of a 40- volume collection of the Standard Novels published by Bentley and Colburn in Charles Traylen's catalogue 126 (item 87). All vols were uniformly bound in half blue polished calf. The 1833 editions of *Mansfield Park* and *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* were offered in the same collection. The price for the collection was £650 and, should the collection not sell as a whole, the Austen items could be had for £25 each. A 'phone call the day the catalogue arrived, however, confirmed that, not surprisingly, the entire collection sold almost as soon as catalogues left the shop.

Pride and Prejudice

The Woolley and Wallis sale in Salisbury on 4 November offered, at lot 75, vol. 1 only of the 1813 edition (presumably the first, Gilson A3) with an estimate of £100-£150. This reached £620, despite having the text generally browned with some offsetting. The Brian MacKenna sale at Christie's on 20 November had the first edition at lot 307, in contemporary half calf gilt, some damage to leaves in vol. 3, lacking half-titles and with the armorial bookplate of Henry Legge. Estimated at £2,000-£3,000 this sold for £8,500. Sotheby's had a copy at lot 120 in their sale of 17 December, slightly browned and spotted, lacking half-titles, in modern red half morocco. The estimate of £5,000-£7,000 was exceeded by the hammer price of £8,050. A copy of the third edition, 1817 (Gilson A5) was offered by Ian Hodgkins in his catalogue 100 (item 152) for £1,400. This had the half-titles and was bound in contemporary full leather with the original backstrips laid down. James Burmester's catalogue 36 also had a copy (item 179), lacking the half-titles, in contemporary green half calf, for £1,000. His catalogue 38 offered another copy (item 149) for £1,250. This had the half-titles to both vols and was in contemporary half calf gilt, with some waterstaining and rubbing.

Mansfield Park

The first edition, 1814 (Gilson A6) was lot 309 in the Brian MacKenna sale at Christie's on 20 November. This had the half-titles, the advertisement leaf in vol. 3, the final blank in vol. 1 (but not that in vol. 2), the early signatures of Theodosia Francis Vernon, and was bound by Sangorski and Sutcliffe in modern brown half morocco. The estimate was £2,500-£3,500 and the hammer price £4,200. Another copy was lot 119 at Sotheby's on 17 December. This had the half-titles, the blank at end of vol. 2, the advertisement leaf in vol. 3 and was bound in 19th-century quarter calf, rebacked, with marbled boards. Previous owners were Joan Glassell, mother of George Douglas, the 8th Duke of Argyll, Lord John Campbell, later 7th Duke of Argyll, and Archibald Smith of Jordanhill (1813-1872). A 19th-century edition of Elizabeth Inchbald's *Lovers' Vows* was included in the lot. The estimate was £3,000-£4,000 and the hammer price was £5,750. Lot 124 in the same sale was another copy, with half-titles and the final blank in vol. 2 but lacking the advertisement leaf, in 19th-century half calf and marbled boards. This had the same estimate and sold for £5,520. John Updike of Edinburgh offered as item 13 in his catalogue 11 a copy confusingly described as the first issue, a term not used in the standard reference works. This had the half-titles and the advertisement leaf and a contemporary ownership signature dated 1814 on each title page. The binding was contemporary half calf with marbled paper endpapers, lacking the black leather labels to vols 2 and 3, and with the heraldic bookplate of Mary Hamilton Nisbet Ferguson on each front pastedown. The price was £1,950. Burmester's catalogue 38 (item 148) offered a second edition, 1816 (Gilson A7) for £1,500. This had all the half-titles and the final imprint leaf in vol. 3. It was bound in contemporary black half calf, with dampstaining throughout. The Brian MacKenna sale at Christie's on 20 November had a copy at lot 310, lacking the half-title to vol. 1, in contemporary tree calf and with the signature of Carne Coote in vol. 3. The estimate was £700-£1,000 and the hammer price £1,600. A copy of the Bentley edition of 1833 (Gilson D3) was part of item 87 in the Traylen catalogue 126, mentioned above.

Emma

A copy of the first edition, 1816 (Gilson A8) was lot 94 in the Sotheby sale of 15-16 July. This copy had the half-titles and was bound by Riviere in three-quarter maroon crushed morocco gilt with linen boards. The estimate was £4,500-£5,000 but it failed to sell. In the MacKenna sale at Christie's on 20 November an imperfect copy was lot 311. In modern half calf gilt by Bayntun, with the half-titles in facsimile and several leaves washed or supplied and with the inscription of Henrietta Law, dated 1821, this was estimated at £1,000-£1,500 but sold for only £900. Sotheby's had a more expensive copy in the sale on 17 December, at lot 121. Formerly in the Sion College library this had the half-titles and was bound in 19th-century limp maroon morocco. Estimated at £2,000-£3,000 this sold for £2,185. Item 7 in Maggs's catalogue 1247 was a copy without half-titles in a modern binding of pale brown calf and marbled sides with green and maroon labels which sounds very similar to the binding of their copy of *Sense and Sensibility* mentioned above

(item 9 in the same catalogue). The price was £2,750.

Northanger Abbey and Persuasion
A copy of the first edition, 1818 (Gilson A9) was item 8 in Maggs's catalogue 1247, for £3,400. This lacked the half-titles and was in contemporary marbled calf with the original spines laid down. Their catalogue 1264 offered another copy for £5,000 (also item 8). This had the half-titles to *Northanger Abbey* but not to *Persuasion* and was bound in full mottled calf by Zaehnsdorf about 1910. This sounds like a companion volume to their *Sense and Sensibility* (item 9 in the same catalogue), mentioned above. The MacKenna sale at Christie's on 20 November had a copy at lot 312, lacking the half-titles to vols 2-4 and the final blank in vol. 4, in a contemporary binding with the armorial bookplate of Baron Ashley, later 7th Earl of Shaftesbury. Estimated at £1,500-£2,000 this sold for £3,200. Sotheby's offered a copy at lot 122 in their sale on 17 December, bound in 19th-century limp maroon morocco, lacking the final blank in vol. 4 and with the ownership signatures of B. L. Chapman of Lincoln's Inn and Archibald Smith of Jordanhill (who also owned the *Mansfield Park* in the same sale, mentioned above). Smith and Chapman were both Chancery barristers and friends. The estimate for this copy was £2,000-£3,000 and it sold for £2,760. A copy of the Bentley edition of 1833 (Gilson D4) was item 308 in Ken Spelman's catalogue 37, in original linen boards, costing £45. Another copy was in the Traylen catalogue 126, mentioned above.

Persuasion
A copy of the first American edition (Gilson B3), owned by Charles Beecher Hogan and mentioned in my two previous reports, reappeared in the Hodgkins catalogue 103 for £3,750 (item 16).

Collected editions
Vol. 2 (*Pride and Prejudice*) of the first collected edition (Gilson D6) was wrongly described by Ian Hodgkins in his catalogue 100 (item 153) as vol. 2 of the Bentley Standard Novels series of 1833. Lacking the half-title and bound in original green morocco grain cloth this was priced at £325. The same catalogue had as item 155 the *Sense and Sensibility* from the same edition, similarly wrongly described, in the same style of binding and for the same price. Jarndyce's catalogue 125 (item 19), by contrast, misdescribed as the first collected edition a set of the Bentley Standard Novels issues of 1833 (Gilson D1-5). These all had the half-titles and were bound in plain contemporary half calf. The half-title to *Pride and Prejudice* was inscribed 'With Mr Bentley's comp.' This set was in my last report also, for the same price of £2,000.

Other material
The Sotheby sale of drawings and watercolours on 7 May included three sets of the original coloured drawings by Charles Edmund Brock for the Dent edition of the novels, published 1907-1909 in their *Series of English Idylls*. Each novel

had 24 illustrations, consisting of a frontispiece, a decorated title page and 22 plates but, with the exception of *Emma*, the sets offered were incomplete. Lot 307, an incomplete set for *Persuasion*, comprising 18 drawings, was estimated at £9,000-£12,000; lot 308, an incomplete set for *Pride and Prejudice* comprising 20 drawings, was estimated at £10,000-£15,000; and lot 309 (the complete set of 24 illustrations to *Emma*) was estimated at £20,000-£25.000. All failed to sell. A further collection of Brock drawings, similarly incomplete, was offered in another Sotheby sale on 11 November. Lot 240 was 14 drawings for *Northanger Abbey* estimated at £6,000-£9,000; lot 241 was 17 drawings for *Sense and Sensibility* estimated at £8,000-£12,000 and lot 242 was 12 of the drawings for *Mansfield Park*, including a copy of the book, estimated at £7,000-£10,000. These also failed to sell. All of these drawings, from the archives of J. M. Dent and Son, were previously sold in 1987, in some instances for very much higher prices than the 1998 estimates (the drawings for *Emma*, for example, fetching £46,200, as recorded in David Gilson's Report for that year). In his catalogue 103 Ian Hodgkins offered five original ink and watercolour drawings by Henry Matthew Brock for the 1898 Dent edition of *Mansfield Park*, for £750 each (item 11). The same catalogue (item 21) offered five pencil sketches and eight pen and ink drawings for *Pride and Prejudice*, described as after the work of Hugh Thomson, possibly commissioned for an early 20th-century edition, such as the one published by S. W. Partridge (Gilson El45). The set was priced at £325. James Edward Austen-Leigh's *Memoir* (Richard Bentley, 1870) with two letters from R. A. Austen-Leigh loosely inserted, was offered at £120 in Ken Spelman's catalogue 37 (item 310). Item 119 in Young's Antiquarian Books catalogue 82 was a copy of Nathaniel Wraxall's *A tour through the western, southern and interior provinces of France*, 1784, from the Chawton House library and bearing the bookplate of Montagu George Knight. This was priced at £230. The Phillips sale of 13 November had, at lot 381, a large archival collection comprising the records and deeds of Chawton Manor, with some from Godmersham Park, and of the Knight, May, Brodnax and Austen families, from 1304-1836. 17 pages of description followed. The estimate was £40,000-£60,000 but it failed to sell. The price was unfortunately beyond the means of the Hampshire and Kent Record Offices, which were of course the most appropriate purchasers, but following some controversy over provenance and the right to sell, the situation has now been happily resolved. The anonymous vendor has agreed to sell the archive for £24,000, including the Phillips commission. The Kent Record Office is putting up £15,000 and the Hampshire Record Office £9,000. Both counties are to receive a grant for half their outlay from the Friends of the National Libraries. Finally, it is pleasing to report that the Edward Knight journal, mentioned in my first report (for 1995) as appearing in a Quaritch catalogue, is now in the safe haven of the Beinecke Library at Yale. It was my telephone call to Susan McCartan, notifying the Society of this item, that eventually landed me with the very enjoyable task of compiling this report.

Jane Austen Studies 1998 will appear in next year's Report.

Emma *considered as a detective story*

P. D. James

It is both a privilege and a pleasure to give this talk at the Annual General Meeting of the Jane Austen Society, although I accepted the invitation with some trepidation; there is nothing I can say about Jane Austen which will, I feel, be new to this audience of her devotees. I shall crave your indulgence before I begin. It is also a particular pleasure to be speaking at Chawton, where in Chawton Cottage Jane Austen lived for the last eight years of her tragically short life. The five years preceding the move to Chawton were unsettled with constant changes of residence and were artistically unproductive with her writing virtually at a stop. It could be argued, therefore, that, without this unpretentious final home in which she found that mixture of rural peace, ordered domestic routine and mild stimulation which best suited her character and her art, we might never have been given the greatest of her novels.

My title this afternoon is '*Emma* considered as a detective story'. It may seem presumptuous as well as a little eccentric to consider one of the greatest novels written in the English language with reference to the conventions of popular genre fiction. Apart from this presumption, the detective story is, after all, usually concerned with murder and there is no crime in *Emma* if we except the despoiling of Mrs Weston's turkey houses; few orthodox detective novels are so rural, so peaceable, so remote in spirit from the crime and violence of Jane Austen's own age or of ours. But the detective story does not require murder; Dorothy L. Sayers's *Gaudy Night* is an example. What it does require is a mystery, facts which are hidden from the reader but which he or she should be able to discover by logical deduction from clues inserted in the novel with deceptive cunning but essential fairness. It is about evaluating evidence, whether of events or of character. It is concerned with bringing order out of disorder and restoring peace and tranquillity to a world temporarily disrupted by the intrusion of alien influences.

Emma, most faultlessly constructed of all Jane Austen's novels, is a story in which peace and reconciliation are produced out of discord, mysteries are elucidated and facts previously misinterpreted are at last seen in their true light. But there are other interesting parallels with the traditional detective story. The genre is often at its most effective when the setting is self-contained and the people are forced into a sometimes unwilling proximity. Here in *Emma* we have a self-contained rural community in which virtually all the characters in the book either live in or near the village of Highbury or, like Frank Churchill, are concerned with it. Only Mrs Elton comes in as a stranger when she marries the vicar. We know them all completely in the sense that we can imagine what they would say and how they would behave when we are not there. We know intimately the life of Highbury: the Crown Inn where the gentlemen congregate to conduct their business or play whist, and where the ball is held; Mrs Ford's shop and what she sells; the vicarage

and the lane to it; the Bateses' apartment; Mrs Goddard's school; the shrubberies of Hartfield and the strawberry-beds of Donwell Abbey. The scene is set.

Against this self-contained background is played out the drama of Emma, handsome, clever and rich, whose energy and powers of mind are fatefully underused so that she occupies herself in disastrous interference in the lives of others. Emma, in her zeal to manipulate and control, misinterprets facts, emotions, situations, relationships, and it is a fair guess that the nineteenth-century reader and the modern reader, coming to the novel for the first time, would be seduced by Jane Austen's cleverness in inducing us to share Emma's misconceptions and misunderstandings. At the end of the book, of course, chastened and penitent, she recognises not only the truths of other people, but the truth of her own heart, and marries the one man who, loving her and understanding her, can best control that soaring imagination.

What then are the mysteries in *Emma*? All of them centre on a human relationship. There is Frank Churchill's secret engagement to Jane Fairfax. There is the hidden truth of Mr Knightley's love for Emma and Emma's growing love for him. There is Emma's misjudgement of Mr Elton's matrimonial intentions. There is the lesser mystery, or perhaps more accurately described as a misunderstanding, centred on Emma's interfering and injudicious attempts to find a husband for her protegée Harriet culminating in her horrified belief that Mr Knightley is in love with Harriet and actually means to marry her.

But the central truth cunningly concealed at the heart of the novel is, of course, the engagement of Frank Churchill to Jane Fairfax. We share the lively interest in Highbury in seeing Mr Weston's long-expected son, and we may perhaps agree with Mr Knightley that the young man certainly should have come earlier to pay his respects to his father's new bride, poor Miss Taylor that was, as Mr Woodhouse would say. But it isn't until Jane Fairfax comes to Highbury to stay with her grandmother and aunt, the Bateses, that Frank Churchill manages to free himself from his demanding aunt and comes to visit his father. We should have spotted that clue. Mr Weston brings him at once to see Emma but after sitting together for a short time they part; Mr Weston has business at the Crown about his hay and a great many errands for Mrs Weston to perform. Frank does not accompany him, but goes instead to visit Mrs Bates and Miss Bates. It would perhaps be rather more natural if he stayed with his father, or went directly home to his aunt, but at the Bateses' he will, of course, find Jane Fairfax, the main motive for his coming to Highbury. His excuse for the visit is that they had met at Weymouth, but it is perhaps a little surprising that he should place Miss Fairfax and her relations so high on his visiting list. And when there he stays much longer than a morning courtesy visit in those more formal days would normally demand. Next day he says to Emma:

> 'Ten minutes would have been all that was necessary, perhaps all that was proper, and I had told my father I should certainly be at home before him. But there was no getting away, no pause, and to my utter astonishment I found that I had been actually sitting with them very nearly three-quarters of an hour.'

Emma asks how Miss Fairfax was looking and, mischievously and cunningly,

Frank pretends not to admire her complexion:

> 'Miss Fairfax is naturally so pale as almost always to give the appearance of ill-health, a most deplorable want of complexion.'

We are seduced into believing from the outset that Frank Churchill is no admirer of Miss Fairfax's beauty. It is when Frank, Mrs Weston and Emma are strolling together in Highbury that Emma asks the question which Frank must have known was inevitable, but which he must also have dreaded. Emma asks: 'Did you see her often at Weymouth? Were you often in the same society?' Frank has only seen Miss Fairfax in the presence of her grandmother or aunt and they have had no opportunity to discuss privately what their story will be. It is a tricky situation for Frank, and this is how Jane Austen deals with it:

> At this moment they were approaching Ford's, and he hastily exclaimed: 'Ha! This must be the very shop that everybody attends every day of their lives, as my father informs me... If it be not inconvenient to you, pray let us go in, that I my prove myself to belong to the place, to be a true citizen of Highbury. I must buy something at Ford's.'

The diversion gives him time to think, but he knows that the question has to be answered. A little later he voluntarily returns to it and cleverly suggests that Emma should address it to Miss Fairfax, saying:

> 'It is always a lady's right to decide on the degree of acquaintance. Miss Fairfax must already have given her account. I should not commit myself by claiming more than she may choose to allow.'

Miss Fairfax has *not* given her account and, reticent and secretive, nor will she.

It is during this walk together that Frank asks Emma's opinion of Jane Fairfax as a musician and the next day we have one of the strongest, perhaps most obvious, clues to the true relationship between Jane and Frank. Frank Churchill goes to London to get his hair cut. The excuse is, of course, not sensible, and he hardly troubles to make it credible; he would not have come to visit his new stepmother with his hair uncut. But he is of course going to London to purchase and arrange for the delivery of the pianoforte to Mrs Bates's house. It is not a grand pianoforte but a solid square one, suitable for the smallness of the sitting-room which he has now seen for himself. We first hear of its arrival when Frank Churchill, with Emma and the rest of her Highbury friends, is attending the dinner party at the Coles'. Here Frank colludes with Emma in her suggestion that the pianoforte comes not from Colonel Campbell, which is the general opinion, but from Mr Dixon, who has married Miss Campbell but who is in love with Jane. And Frank, pretending to be convinced, finally admits that 'I can see it in no other light than as an offering of love.' It is, indeed, an offering of love. The clue here could not be stated more plainly. It is at the same Coles' dinner party that Emma detects Frank gazing fixedly across the room at his love, and when Emma notices this, he recollects himself and claims he cannot take his eyes away from Jane's outré hair-style. That Jane herself very well knows who sent the pianoforte is apparent to us from her embarrassment when it is referred to, an embarrassment which Emma attributes to Jane's guilty love for her friend's husband.

Mrs Weston, kind-hearted and musical, was particularly interested by the circumstance, and Emma could not help being amused at her perseverance in dwelling on the subject; and having so much to ask and to say as to tone, touch and pedal, totally unsuspicious of that wish of saying as little about it as possible, which she [Emma] plainly read in the fair heroine's countenance.

Next day Emma and Harriet are walking to Highbury to buy ribbons in Ford's when, looking down the Randalls road, they see Mrs Weston and her son-in-law. Frank is, of course, again calling on Jane Fairfax. Mrs Weston says:

'My companion tells me that I absolutely promised Miss Bates last night, that I would come this morning. I was not aware of it myself. I did not know that I had fixed a day, but I am going now.'

Mrs Weston, of course, had not fixed a day but Frank cannot wait to see his love again, and no doubt to see the pianoforte. He makes some little demur at the visit, but he obviously has every intention of accompanying Mrs Weston to the Bateses' and not being diverted to Randalls.

One of the strongest clues to the secret engagement is the amount of time Frank Churchill spends with the Bateses. Apart from its being almost the first house at which he calls, he manages to devise opportunities of being with Jane on every possible occasion. When the ball at the Crown is mooted and the Westons and Emma are examining the possibilities of the room there, it is he who suggests that Miss Bates should be invited to join them. Mrs Weston understandably is unconvinced that the garrulous and too obliging Miss Bates will be able to offer any real assistance, but she is sent for and brings Jane with her, as Frank very well knew that she would.

Then comes that moment, disagreeable to Emma but devastating to Jane, when Frank Churchill is called back to Enscombe. Here he calls on the Bateses before he comes to say goodbye to Emma. He almost tells Emma his secret, imagining that her quick wit has probably already divined it. The conversation is as follows. Emma says:

'Not five minutes to spare even for your friends, Miss Fairfax and Miss Bates? How unlucky! Miss Bates's powerful, argumentative mind might have strengthened yours.'

'Yes – I have called there; passing the door I thought it better. It was the right thing to do. I went in for three minutes, and was detained by Miss Bates's being absent. She was out; and I felt it impossible not to wait till she came in... It was better to pay my visit, then.' He hesitated, got up and walked to the window. 'In short', said he, 'perhaps, Miss Woodhouse – I think you can hardly be quite without suspicion.'

He looked at her as if wanting to read her thoughts. She hardly knew what to say. It seemed like the forerunner of something absolutely serious, which she did not wish. Forcing herself to speak, therefore, in the hope of putting it by, she calmly said: 'You were quite in the right; it was most natural to pay your visit, then.'

She heard him sigh. It was natural for him to feel that he had *cause* to sigh.

He could not believe her to be encouraging him.

Emma, deluded as ever, is, of course, half-expecting a proposal, or at least a declaration of love. In reality Frank Churchill, suspecting that Emma has guessed his secret, has got very close to telling her that he is engaged to Jane Fairfax. A careful reading of the passage shows clearly that what he is about to confide is related not to Hartfield, but to his visit to the Bateses.

So Frank Churchill departs, to the distress of Highbury and, no doubt, the satisfaction of Mr Knightley, and we come to the clue of Jane Fairfax and the letters. We do not hear of her going out to the post office to collect her personal mail until Frank Churchill is no longer at Highbury. We learn that Jane is receiving letters, which she prefers to collect herself, at the dinner party which Emma gives for Mr Elton and his new bride, when Mr John Knightley, sitting next to Jane, expresses the hope that she did not venture too far that morning during the wet weather. He says:

> 'The post office has great charm at one period of our lives. When you have lived to my age you will begin to think letters are never worth going through the rain for.'

Immediately the kind Mrs Weston expresses concern that Miss Fairfax has been out in the rain and the officious Mrs Elton pesters her with offers that her servants can fetch the mail. Jane, of course, is quietly adamant. In the early nineteenth century young men and young women did not correspond unless they were engaged, and for Frank Churchill to be known to be corresponding with Jane Fairfax would be fatal to their secret.

And it is, of course, one of these letters which puts them in danger again once Frank has returned. This is in Chapter 41 of the novel, where Emma, Harriet and Mr Knightley, taking an evening walk, fall in with Mr and Mrs Weston, Frank Churchill, Miss Bates and Jane Fairfax.

Emma invites them all back to Hartfield, and they are turning into the grounds when Mr Perry passes on horseback and the gentlemen speak of his horse. We then have this conversation:

> 'By the bye', said Frank Churchill to Mrs Weston, 'what became of Mr Perry's plan of setting up his carriage?'
>
> Mrs Weston looked surprised, and said, 'I did not know that he ever had any such plan.'
>
> 'Nay, I had it from you. You wrote me word of it three months ago.'
>
> 'Me! Impossible!'

Frank, obviously embarrassed, suggests that he must have dreamed of Mr Perry's carriage and attempts to change the conversation by suggesting that Miss Smith walks as if she were tired. But he cannot so easily rid himself of the subject. Miss Bates confirms that there was indeed such an idea for Mrs Perry herself had mentioned it to Mrs Bates. She said:

> 'Jane, don't you remember grandmamma's telling us of it when we got home? I forget where we had been walking to – very likely to Randall's; yes, I think it was to Randall's.... I never mentioned it to a soul that I know of....

Extraordinary dream indeed!'

It is at that moment, when they are entering the hall, that Mr Knightley glances at Jane. He sees confusion suppressed or laughed away in Frank Churchill's face, who seems determined to capture Jane's eye, but Jane passes between them into the hall and looks at neither. The John Knightleys and their children are at Hartfield at this time and a little later all the company sit themselves round a circular table to play with the children's alphabets, forming words for each other. Frank Churchill places a word before Miss Fairfax. She discovers it, and with a faint smile pushes it away, leaving the letters to be immediately mixed up with the others. But Harriet picks it up and, with the help of Mr Knightley, rearranges the letters to form the word 'blunder'. Harriet exultingly proclaims it and there is a blush on Jane's cheek. It is indeed a blunder. Who else could have conveyed to Frank the news of Mr Perry's proposal to set up a carriage but Jane Fairfax?

And there are, of course, other clues. If we wonder why Frank Churchill should suddenly have remembered his obligation to his father and his father's bride, we may ask ourselves why Jane Fairfax is content to remain so long at Highbury when she has a standing invitation from Colonel and Mrs Campbell to join them in Ireland with the Dixons. Frank, of course, attempts to explain this, at least to Emma, by their joint collusion in the idea that Jane cannot be with the Dixons since she has seduced Mr Dixon's affections from his bride. But this doesn't prevent Emma from finding it strange that Jane should wish to stay at Highbury. As she says to Frank Churchill:

> 'I'm sure there must be a particular cause for her choosing to come to Highbury instead of going with the Campbells to Ireland. Here she must be leading a life of privation and penance; there it would have been all enjoyment. As to the pretence of trying her native air, I look upon that as a mere excuse. What can anyone's native air do for them in the months of January, February and March?'

But Jane, of course, cannot bear to leave Highbury. Frank Churchill could not possibly visit her either in London or in Ireland, but he had every excuse for coming regularly to Highbury whenever he could obtain Mrs Churchill's consent.

And then there is the telling incident at the Donwell Abbey strawberry-picking. Jane is monopolised by Mrs Elton and officiously urged to take the desirable situation as governess which Mrs Elton has procured for her. Frank Churchill has promised to ride over from Richmond and is eagerly awaited, but still has not arrived. And then Jane, in obvious distress, tells Emma that she must walk home, refuses the use of the Hartfield carriage and sets off alone. Fifteen minutes later Frank Churchill arrives and for the first time Emma, and we, see him in a serious bad temper; deploring the heat, almost wishing he hadn't come, saying he's too hot to eat, and announcing that he's tired of England and proposes, as soon as his aunt is well enough, to go abroad. But surely Frank Churchill, arriving fifteen minutes after Jane Fairfax left, must have met her on the road. He admits as much, but doesn't even mention her name. He says:

'You will all be going soon, I suppose; the whole party breaking up. I met

one as I came – Madness in such weather! Absolute madness!'

It doesn't occur to Emma, nor did it to me when I first read the novel, that Frank Churchill's bad temper is the result of that encounter on the road with a distressed and reproachful Jane.

Jane can bear it no longer. She breaks off the engagement and becomes ill. Emma feels real compassion, but her efforts at help, and even her arrowroot, are spurned. Jane is consumed with jealousy and distress. But then, of course, all ends happily. Mrs Churchill, who was never admitted by anyone to be seriously ill, justifies her hypochondria by dying. Frank Churchill has no difficulty in obtaining the easy-going Mr Churchill's consent to his marriage, and returns triumphantly to Highbury to claim his bride.

The news of the engagement is initially greeted with great distress by the Westons, who were completely taken in by Frank's attentions to Emma. But when they realise that Emma's heart is untouched, they are reconciled, as is the whole of Highbury. But it is surprising that the engagement should cause such wide-spread astonishment. The clues to the truth were there for them to deduce as they are for us. But only the perceptive Mr Knightley suspected the truth.

The reader has small excuse for misinterpreting Mr Elton's matrimonial aspirations, but here Emma is particularly obtuse. Mr Elton's visits to Hartfield are to commend himself to her, not because he knows he will find Harriet there. His tender sighings over Harriet's portrait, painted by Emma, and the care he takes to convey the precious consignment to London for framing, is because he aspires to the artist not the sitter. The conundrum he writes and sends anonymously is obviously meant for Emma, and even Emma is struck by the incongruity of ascribing bright eyes and a ready wit to her friend. Mr Elton has no intention of missing Mrs Weston's dinner party just because Harriet Smith is ill. And there is the evidence of character, as important in well-written detective stories as it is in Emma, and always the most telling of clues. Mr Elton is the last person to court a penniless and illegitimate girl. As Mr Knightley tells Emma:

> 'Elton is a very good sort of man and a very respectable vicar of Highbury, but not at all likely to make an imprudent match. He knows the value of a good income as well as anybody. Elton may talk sentimentally but he will act rationally.'

But Emma's final misunderstanding, that Mr Knightley seriously wishes to marry Harriet, was perhaps fortunate. It was only when she was faced with this appalling possibility that Emma admitted the truth. Mr Knightley must marry no one but herself. When we come to consider Mr Knightley and his love for Emma – and he tells her at the end of the book that he has loved her since she was thirteen – the strongest clue is undoubtedly the amount of time he spends at Hartfield. He does in fact visit Emma and her father daily, sitting with them in the evenings, and this can hardly be for the lively pleasure of Mr Woodhouse's company.

And Mr Knightley is always genuinely interested in every aspect of Emma's welfare, even her reading-list and her handwriting. He takes the trouble to correct her when he thinks her wrong and to praise her when she does right, but he does it

always as an equal, not as a patronising superior or with avuncular condescension. He respects her intelligence as well as admiring her beauty and to that beauty he is certainly not impervious. As he says to Mrs Weston, 'I love to look at her', and we can picture him as he sits, night after night, in the drawing-room at Hartfield enduring the tedium of Mr Woodhouse's conversation and the fire which Mr Woodhouse's tender habits require on almost every evening of the year, resting his eyes on Emma's lovely face before walking home to the coolness and solitude of Donwell Abbey.

The second and perhaps the strongest clue is, of course, his unreasonable jealousy of Frank Churchill. The announcement that Frank is at last to visit his father and his father's new wife causes a general flutter of anticipation in Highbury which Emma shares. Mr Knightley must be aware that the Westons hope that Emma and Frank will fall in love. Mr Knightley betrays jealous disapproval of the young man even before his arrival. When Frank Churchill defers his first visit because of pressure from Enscombe, no one is more censorious than Mr Knightley.

> 'There is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do if he chooses, and that is his duty; not by manoeuvring and finessing, but by vigour and resolution.'

Emma argues vigorously that without being acquainted with Enscombe and Mrs Churchill's temper they should not be too hard on Frank Churchill, and accuses Mr Knightley of being determined to think ill of him.

> 'Me! Not at all', replies Mr Knightley. 'I do not want to think ill of him. I should be as ready to acknowledge his merits as any other man, but I hear of none, except what are merely personal, that he is well grown and good-looking with smooth, plausible manners.'

Their argument continues, and when Emma points out that her love for Mr and Mrs Weston gives her a decided prejudice in Frank Churchill's favour, Mr Knightley says crossly, 'He is a person I never think of from one month's end to another', a somewhat surprising assertion since he has obviously been giving a great deal of thought to Mr Churchill's defects of character and behaviour and has spent the last half-hour vigorously arguing about him.

And when Frank Churchill does at last arrive – a day early, which is a little inconsiderate of him bearing in mind Mrs Weston's desire to have everything at Randalls perfect for his arrival – only Mr Knightley doesn't join in the general praise of him throughout the parishes of Donwell and Highbury. Hearing about his trip to London to have his hair cut, he comments, 'Hmm. Just the trifling silly fellow I took him for.' He even criticises his handwriting. 'I do not admire it. It wants strength. It is like a woman's writing.' And Mr Knightley is alone in disliking the prospect of the ball at the Crown where, of course, Miss Woodhouse and Mr Frank Churchill will undoubtedly shine. Mr Knightley, the normally fair-minded and judicious Mr Knightley, can't say a good word for Frank Churchill until, at the end of the novel, 'Emma is his Emma by hand and word' and we read:

> If he could have thought of Frank Churchill then he might have deemed him a very good sort of fellow.

And if Mr Knightley is constantly in Emma's company, continually concerned

with her welfare and her conduct, he is certainly seldom out of Emma's mind. Every male character is judged against him:

> Much as she liked Mr Weston's open manners and friendliness to all, she felt that to be the favourite and the intimate of a man who had so many intimates and confidantes was not the very first distinction on the scale of vanity. General benevolence, but not general friendship made a man what he ought to be; she could fancy such a man.

It is of course a precise description of Mr Knightley. And when Emma, accompanied by Harriet, pays a wedding visit to the newly married Eltons, there is another clue given with great subtlety. Mrs Elton says:

> 'My friend Knightley' had been so often mentioned that I was really impatient to see him; and I must do my caro sposo the justice to say that he need not be ashamed of his friend. Knightley is quite the gentleman. I like him very much. Decidedly, I think, a very gentlemanlike man.'

Emma can hardly contain her indignation until they have left the house:

> 'Insufferable woman!' was her immediate exclamation. 'Worse than I had supposed. Absolutely insufferable! Knightley! I could not have believed it. Knightley! Never seen him in her life before and calls him Knightley! And to discover that he is a gentleman! A little upstart vulgar being, with her Mr E and her *caro sposo*, and her resources, and all her airs of pert pretension and under-bred finery. Actually to discover that My Knightley is a gentleman! I doubt whether he will return the compliment, and discover her to be a lady.'

She then wonders what Frank Churchill would say about it if he were here and adds:

> 'Always the first person to be thought of! How I catch myself out! Frank Churchill comes as regularly into my mind!'

But she hasn't, of course, been thinking of Frank Churchill. It has been Mr Knightley who came first into her mind, Mr Knightley of whom she constantly thinks.

When I discussed this talk with my daughter Jane, she reminded me of another example of Emma's preoccupation with Mr Knightley, which she described as 'the clue of the spruce beer'. Harriet is demonstrating her total recovery from her infatuation with Mr Elton by destroying in front of Emma her 'most precious treasures'; the court plaister which Mr Elton had worn on his cut finger and the end of an old pencil which Mr Elton had used to make a note in his pocket-book about Mr Knightley's recipe for brewing spruce beer.

> 'I do remember it', cried Emma; 'I perfectly remember it. Talking about spruce beer. Oh! yes – Mr Knightley and I both saying we liked it, and Mr Elton's seeming resolved to learn to like it too. I perfectly remember it. Mr Knightley was standing just here, was not he? I have an idea he was standing just here.'

And then there is her passionate argument with Mrs Weston when her old governess suggests, after the ball, that Mr Knightley might wish to marry Jane Fairfax. Emma, of course, has convinced herself that her dislike of Mr Knightley marrying anybody is based on her wish that her nephew, Henry, shall eventually

inherit the Donwell property.

'Mr Knightley and Jane Fairfax!' she exclaims. 'Dear Mrs Weston, how could you think of such a thing? Mr Knightley! Mr Knightley must not marry! You would not have little Henry cut out from Donwell?'

Then, a little later:

'I am sure he has not the least idea of it. Do not put it into his head. Why should he marry? He is as happy as possible by himself; with his farm and his sheep, and his library, and all the parish to manage. He has no occasion to marry, either to fill up his time or his heart.'

And the argument continues with Emma increasing in virulence against the idea. As Mrs Weston says:

'If Mr Knightley really wished to marry, you would not have him refrain on Henry's account, a boy of six years old, who knows nothing of the matter?'

We may suspect that Emma's vehemence has very little to do with little Henry and his inheritance. Later Emma cannot resist a delicate hint to Mr Knightley about his admiration for Jane Fairfax, and is told:

'That will never be. Miss Fairfax, I dare say, would not have me if I were to ask her, but I am very sure that I shall never ask her.'

Emma compliments him on his lack of vanity and Jane Austen writes:

He seemed hardly to hear her; he was thoughtful – and in a manner which showed him not pleased, soon afterwards said: 'So you have been settling that I should marry Jane Fairfax?'

'No, indeed I have not, for you have scolded me too much for match-making for me to presume to take such a liberty with you. What I said just now meant nothing. Oh, no, upon my word, I have not the smallest wish for you to marry Jane Fairfax, or Jane anybody. You would not come and sit with us in this comfortable way if you were married.'

Here again there is a subtle clue. Why should Mr Knightley be so displeased at the suggestion he might be interested in Jane Fairfax, the beautiful, accomplished and elegant Jane? Surely it is not the gossip which has displeased him; Highbury lives by gossip. No, it is the thought that Emma can discuss the prospect of his marrying another woman with such apparent equanimity.

Then there is the long-deferred ball at the Crown, one of the most brilliant chapters in the book and one in which there are clues to all the relationships as well as the incident which gives rise to further misunderstanding when Mr Knightley dances with Harriet and she first imagines that she is in love with him. The evening is packed with interesting little incidents. There is the moment when Mrs Elton says to her husband:

'Oh! you have found us out at last, have you, in our seclusion? I was this moment telling Jane, I thought you would begin to be impatient for tidings of us.'

'Jane', repeated Frank Churchill, with a look of surprise and displeasure. 'That is easy – but Miss Fairfax does not disapprove it, I suppose.'

Emma asks in a whisper: 'How do you like Mrs Elton?'

'Not at all.'

'You are ungrateful.'

'Ungrateful! What do you mean?' Then changing from a frown to a smile 'No, do not tell me! I do not want to know what you mean. Where is my father? When are we to begin dancing?'

Emma could hardly understand him; he seemed in an odd humour.

Emma is referring to Mrs Elton's recent praise of Frank to his father. 'A very fine young man indeed, Mr Weston. A very handsome young man, and his manners are precisely what I like.' Frank, of course, thinks that Emma is referring to Mrs Elton's condescending kindness to his secret love.

Mrs Elton, as the bride, opens the ball with Mr Weston, with Frank Churchill and Emma following. But even when she is dancing with Mr Churchill Emma's eyes and thoughts are with Mr Knightley. Jane Austen writes:

> He could not have appeared to greater advantage perhaps anywhere, than where he had placed himself. His tall, firm, upright figure among the bulky forms and stooping shoulders of the elderly men, was such as Emma felt must draw everybody's eyes; and, excepting her own partner, there was not one among the whole row of young men who could be compared with him. He moved a few steps nearer, and those few steps were enough to prove in how gentlemanlike a manner, with what natural grace, he must have danced, would he but take the trouble.

He does later take the trouble, when he leads out Harriet to the set after she has been disgracefully snubbed by Mr Elton. But, at the end of the chapter, he dances with Emma.

'Whom are you going to dance with?' asks Mr Knightley.

She hesitated a moment and then replied, 'With you, if you will ask me.'

'Will you?' said he, offering his hand.

'Indeed I will. You have shown that you can dance, and you know we are not really so much brother and sister as to make it at all improper.'

'Brother and sister! No indeed!'

Those few words surely tell us all we need to know about Mr Knightley's feelings for Emma.

There is one moment of physical intimacy between Mr Knightley and Emma which should in its delicacy and, for me, its erotic charge, tell us that they are in love. Mr Knightley, obviously convinced that Emma and Frank Churchill will soon be engaged, unexpectedly determines to go and stay with his brother and Emma's sister, and comes to Hartfield to take his leave. He cannot bear to be in Highbury when the engagement is announced. Emma has just returned from visiting Miss Bates to try to make amends for her deplorable unkindness at the Box Hill picnic. Learning from Mr Woodhouse where Emma has been, Mr Knightley looks at her 'with a glow of regard, as if his eyes received the truth from hers, and all that had passed of good in her feelings were at once caught and honoured'. Jane Austen writes:

> She was warmly gratified, and in another moment still more so, by a little

movement of more than common friendliness on his part. He took her hand; whether she had not herself made the first motion, she could not say – she might, perhaps, have rather offered it – but he took her hand, pressed it, and certainly was on the point of carrying it to his lips – when from some fancy or other, he suddenly let it go. The invitation, however, was indubitable. Nothing became him more. It was with him of so simple yet so dignified a nature.

It is one of the most touching moments in the novel.

All detective stories have that final chapter or chapters in which the clues are explained, misunderstandings resolved, errors corrected and the truth at last revealed. Jane Austen does this in three ways. Mrs Weston explains to Emma the full story of Jane Fairfax's ill-begun but now prosperous love from Jane's point of view. We have Emma's musings as she recalls with remorse her humiliating errors of understanding and offences against good taste. And we have Frank Churchill's long explanatory, self-justifying letter to his step-mother which Mrs Weston, of course, shares with Emma. This device of explaining the mystery in epistolary form is not uncommon in detective fiction. In Frank's letter the significance of all the moves in this game of love and misunderstanding are clearly explained. Jane Fairfax's increasing unhappiness at the deception she was practising, his own sanguine expectations that somehow all would come right, his deliberate courting of Emma to divert attention while he was convinced that Emma herself was indifferent to him and, indeed, shared his secret, the quarrel with Jane Fairfax after the strawberry-picking, and her letter breaking off the engagement. I suspect that when, as a girl, I first read *Emma* I was left wondering why I hadn't seen it all myself.

And did they indeed live happily ever after? Mr Woodhouse is made so miserable by Emma's engagement that he can only be reconciled to the marriage by their suggestion that Mr Knightley should live at Hartfield. As Mr Elton says, 'rather he than me'. G.B. Stern, in a book entitled *More Talk of Jane Austen* published in 1950, looks ahead for seven years and suggests that indeed there were great strains on the marriage when Mr Knightley was required continually to suffer Mr Woodhouse's companionship while his and Emma's children were at Donwell Abbey. G.B. Stern gets over the difficulty by conveniently killing off Mr John Knightley so that Isabella can return to her father's house. Emma takes her rightful place at Donwell Abbey.

Well, that is all conjecture and, as Frank Churchill says, 'Sometimes one conjectures right, and sometimes one conjectures wrong'. I think that I shall choose to believe the author when she tells us so plainly at the end of *Emma,*

> 'The wishes, the hopes, the confidence, the predictions of the small band of true friends who witnessed the marriage were fully answered in the perfect happiness of the union.'

The Jane Austen Society



Report for 1999

The Jane Austen Society

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Registered Charity No. 1040613

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Vice-Presidents Elizabeth Jenkins OBE, Nigel Nicolson MBE

Chairman Brian Southam

Vice-Chairman Alwyn Austen

Hon. Treasurer Crispin Drummond

Hon. Secretary Susan McCartan, Carton House, Redwood Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5PE Tel: 01420 562469

e-mail: janeaustensoc@freeuk.com

Committee Fiona Ainsworth,*† Jean Bowden,†† Tom Carpenter,* Tony Corley,† Christopher Jarman,†† Gaye King,†† Maggie Lane, Deirdre Le Faye, Helen Lefroy, Adrian Light,* William Ramsay,*†† Louise Ross,†† David Selwyn,† Diana Shervington,††* Anthony Tilke,†† Anthony Trollope,†† Rosemary Trollope,†† Robin Vick †

* co-opted † from July 1999 †† to July 1999

Accountants to the Society Messrs Sheen Stickland & Co, Alton

Editor David Selwyn *Assistant editor* Jill Gandy

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Front cover: Portrait of Mrs Elizabeth Heathcote (1834) by Isaac F. Bird. Reproduced by kind permission of Baroness van Lynden-Heathcote. See p. 32.

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From the Chairman

This is an important year for both the Society and all lovers of Jane Austen. It marks the sixtieth year of the Society's existence and the 225th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth. We are linking these events with the opening of the new Millennium and we hope that as many members as possible will be able to participate in our celebrations - at Winchester, Chawton. Box Hill and Westminster Abbey, and at the London Conference at Senate House.

The tributes enshrined in *Jane Austen : A Celebration* are already with us; and we have just heard at long last that the faculty has been granted for the repositioning of Mr Austen's gravestone at St. Swithin's Church, Walcot, the church where he was married in April 1764 and where he was buried in January 1805. A tablet recording these facts and noting Jane Austen's life and authorship will be placed nearby, where it can be seen by visitors - a notable event in this year of celebration.

Nancy Lady Smiley

Nancy Elizabeth Louise Hardy Beaton
born London 30 September 1909
married Sir Hugh Smiley Bt 1933
died at Bentworth, near Alton, 6 June 1999

Lady Smiley became a member of the Society's Committee in 1949 and was joined by Sir Hugh four years later when he became Secretary in 1953. In 1969, Sir Hugh also took on the position of Chairman, holding both posts concurrently until 1985, and continuing as Chairman until ill-health forced his retirement in 1989.

Sir Hugh was a Grenadier and conducted the Society's affairs with military precision and a Guardsman's courteous efficiency. In all this, Nancy Smiley smoothed Sir Hugh's Grenadier touch with a literary taste and sensibility coupled with great personal charm and style. She was devoted to the Society and continued to serve on the Committee until 1993, a total of over forty years; and, together with Elizabeth Jenkins, she became a Vice-President in 1995, retaining her vigilant interest in the Society's affairs.

Nancy Smiley will be sorely missed by a wide circle of friends and we intend to establish a tribute to the unique contribution made by Hugh and Nancy Smiley to the Society's development and success.

Brian Southam

The Society is sorry to record the death of Helen Brown, a descendant of Admiral Sir Francis William Austen's daughter Catherine Hubback, and a founder member of the Jane Austen Society.

The Annual General Meeting

Richard Knight, President, welcomed a large gathering of members to the business session. The Chairman extended a particularly warm welcome to those from overseas. Sadly, Nancy Lady Smiley had died in June, in her ninetieth year. The Committee had today completed its five-year term. As nominations had not exceeded places there was no contested election and members had been informed of the names of the new Committee. Several new film adaptations of Jane Austen's novels were in production, and to date 66 sequels have been published. The Jane Austen Memorial Trust's action to oppose an application to register the name of Jane Austen as a trademark for toiletry products has been upheld, pending a right to appeal. This may prove a useful precedent. The nine local branches and groups were flourishing. A Jane Austen Centre in Bath had opened, not under the Society's auspices. The acquisition fund had financed the purchase of a miniature of Mr Thomas Knight of Godmersham, reproduced on the cover of the 1998 Report and now displayed in Chawton Museum. Many requirements still had to be met before the tombstone of the Revd George Austen at St Swithin's Church, Walcot, Bath, could be restored and moved to a more prominent position. The Society was indebted to Michael Davis, a local resident, who was leading the project. A working party from the London group had uncovered the ledger stone of Philadelphia Hancock, Eliza de Feuillide, later Austen, and her son Hastings, in Hampstead Churchyard. Good relations had been maintained between the Memorial Trust and the Society and Tom Carpenter had joined the Committee as a co-opted member. The Trust celebrates its golden jubilee this year, and masterminded celebrations in April, together with the Society, at the unveiling of a plaque at 10 Henrietta Street. The Society's educational work continued. Mrs Diana Shervington led a site visit by some members of the Committee to the Memorial Garden in Lyme Regis in June; she maintains links with the Town Council over proposed improvements. The Wye weekend conference 'Jane Austen and Kent' would be held in September. Millennium plans included an extended AGM, with Evensong in Winchester Cathedral on Friday, 14 July and a picnic at Box Hill on Sunday, 16 July. Commemorative Evensong would be celebrated in Westminster Abbey on Friday, 15 December. *Jane Austen: A Celebration* would be published jointly by the Society and Carcanet Press in Spring 2000. Student subscriptions of £5.00 per annum have been introduced.

The Chairman thanked retiring members of the Committee and in particular Tony Trollope, the Honorary Secretary between 1985 and 1993, and his wife Rosemary. The continuing support of the President, Richard Knight, was much valued, and thanks were extended to Sandy Lerner and the trustees of Chawton House Library for allowing the Society to meet in the grounds of the House.

The Honorary Secretary reported an active and rewarding year. There had been a slight decline in membership numbers from 1992 last year to 1910, but these members were all fully paid-up. 151 new members, 31 from overseas, and 6 new

life members had been welcomed. Each year a number of annual members fail to renew their subscriptions. 17 members resigned, 21 moved leaving no forwarding address, and 11 were claimed by mortality. Twenty-five overseas corporate life members, some of 40 years' vintage, had been invited to support their membership by paying the annual subscription of £33. Seven had enrolled. E-mail and website references now cite the Society's name. Branches and groups had devised interesting programmes for local enthusiasts. Members who had helped in the running of the Society during the year were warmly thanked.

The Honorary Treasurer reported the Society to be in good financial standing. There was an earned surplus of £5000 and £50,000 lodged at the bank. The accounts were published in the *Report*. Members were invited to consider two proposals: the restoration of the acquisition fund to its original £2000, following the purchase of the miniature, which cost about £1000, and the Society's underwriting of up to £2000 to cover the cost of the restoration of the Revd George Austen's tombstone, with existing and further donations to be placed against this. Both proposals were approved. The Chairman reminded members that the restored stone was to be moved to a central position in the church garden, just inside the railings, tilted towards visitors standing on the pavement, with an explanatory plaque to one side. The Vice-Chairman, Alwyn Austen, was happy to stay in post beyond the five years ending at this AGM, and the agreement of the Meeting was sought and obtained. Alwyn Austen was congratulated by the President.

In the afternoon the President welcomed Sandy Lerner, members and guests, and outlined the progress of the restoration of Chawton House and grounds. Two co-directors had recently been appointed: Jane Alderson, a civil engineer, and Michael Wheeler, formerly Professor of English Literature at Lancaster University. The Chairman summarised the morning's proceedings. The Chairman of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust, Tom Carpenter, spoke of developments during the 50-year history of Jane Austen's House and Museum, thanking the many people who had helped to keep the memory of Jane Austen alive. The miniature of Thomas Knight and copies of seven life-size silhouettes of Jane Austen's nephew William Knight and six of his children, were on display in the house and granary. The President introduced Claire Tomalin, whose talk 'Jane Austen: being rich, being poor' was warmly received by members and guests. The vote of thanks was proposed by Deirdre Le Faye. After tea an overflowing congregation attended commemorative Evensong in St Nicholas' Church, celebrated by the new vicar, the Revd Tony Jardine. The church was beautifully decorated, and formed part of Chawton's weekend flower festival.

Susan McCartan

Bath and Bristol

Our year of events began in January at 4 Sydney Place Bath with the traditional Cassandra's Tea Party, enhanced on this occasion with some graceful harp music by Lucy Davis. During tea, the painting 'Jane Austen at Home', a conversation piece which Michael and Anne Davis had specially commissioned for the house, was formally unveiled in the presence of the artist, Tony Heaton. The AGM in May was held in the elegance of the Academy Room at Prior Park, when some 50 members and friends gathered to hear guest speaker Irene Collins charm us all with her delightful talk entitled 'Exploring the Steventon Years'. This was followed by a presentation made to Maggie Lane, as a mark of our gratitude, on the occasion of her retirement as secretary and organiser of the Bath and Bristol Group, a position she had held for over ten years.

At the end of June, our summer visit was made to Blaise Castle when David Selwyn led a party up to the castle and delivered a fascinating talk on 'The Picturesque', with an appropriate reading from *Northanger Abbey*. We then had a picnic tea in Blaise Park before we dispersed, some to look at Blaise Hamlet while others went in search of Kings Weston House. For our final meeting of 1999, about twenty met at 4 Sydney Place in October and enjoyed a lively, informal discussion on *Mansfield Park*. As always, we are greatly indebted to David Selwyn for leading our discussion.

Gavin Turner

Birmingham

The annual study day jointly organised with the University of Birmingham was held on 6 November. The theme was ' Relationships ' and an audience of about one hundred enjoyed three excellent presentations. Bridget Pugh considered the role of sisters in Jane Austen's work, demonstrating how Jane used various 'sets' of sisters as a means of illustrating fraternal emotions, family communications and patriarchal society.

Keith Parsons and Dr Pamela Mason jointly presented 'The Luxury of Silence', a study of the key silences in Jane's work, and their importance as a device in the development of the novels.

David Selwyn explored community relationships within the novels and Jane's own family in 'Obligation and Dependency'. The novels contain many examples of diverse communities and families but the underlying message is consistent: individuals who fail to put the interests of the community above themselves do not find happiness.

This short report does scant justice to the quality of the presentations. On behalf of all who attended I extend our thanks and appreciation to our speakers

Julie Sharland

Cambridge

Membership has grown slowly during our second year as a group and we now have 28 members.

In January Dr. Mara Kalnins gave a most stimulating talk in Corpus Christi College on '*Persuasion*, *Sanditon* and Regency England'. Dr. Kalnins has kindly consented to be the group's Academic Adviser.

The April meeting was held at Hazel Mills's house where she gave a fascinating account of how she began to collect books by and about Jane Austen and how her interest has widened over the years and her library has grown. 'The Pleasures of Collecting Austeniana' were described with eclectic enthusiasm. Hazel put on display some of her rarer editions and copies of special interest and the very large number of volumes on show gave the rest of us some idea of the shelf space that is needed when a hobby turns into an addiction.

Five members of the group attended the AGM in July and, as always, greatly enjoyed the day.

A Wine and Cheese Evening was held in September during which there was a Jane Austen quiz, compiled by Hazel Mills and won by Michael Grosvenor-Myer, whose powers of recall put most of us to shame. Members then read their favourite passage from the novels and talked about why they had chosen that particular piece.

The group's last meeting in 1999 was in November to hear Dr Janet Bottoms on 'The Juvenilia'. It was a lively and entertaining evening which gave some fresh insights and sent many of us, I suspect, back to the Juvenilia with newly opened eyes.

Audrey Stenner

Hampshire

Our Spring meeting took the form of a visit to Ibthorpe House, near Andover, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs ffrench-Blake. After a tour of the house, many parts of which remain unchanged from Jane Austen's time, members enjoyed tea before moving on to nearby Hurstbourne Tarrant Church, where James Austen married Mary Lloyd in 1797. Deirdre Le Faye spoke about the Lloyd family history, and there was time to look at the Debary family memorials.

Susan McCartan

Kent

The year started with our AGM in March and when the business was over, Irene Collins gave us an excellent and most enjoyable talk on 'Jane Austen's Clergy, Good and Bad'. For our now customary Godmersham day in June, when we were joined by members of the London Group, the house being still unavailable, we were allowed to use the church. In the morning the Revd Michael Kenning spoke most interestingly on Jane Austen and Steventon, and after picnic lunches we were

entertained by the Regency Duo with appropriate songs and music and with readings from Jane Austen's works. In September there was the Wye Conference, which gave us much pleasure and food for thought, and offered members a chance to meet others from this country and elsewhere. At the Annual Dinner in November Tom Carpenter was our very welcome guest speaker, and the evening was the pleasantly convivial one we have come to expect. The discussion group continues to thrive, meeting twice a year in members' houses, and in April we had the great pleasure of being invited to Goodnestone by Lord and Lady FitzWalter. To discuss *Pride and Prejudice* in the very room where Jane Austen is thought to have danced was a great thrill, though slightly daunting.

Bunty Goldup

London

Our varied events in 1999 comprised: a talk 'Jane Austen, was she a genius?' given by Tony Corley on 20 March; a full day outing on 5 June to join the Kent branch, comprising a tour of Godmersham Park and a talk and concert in the church; a meeting with JASNA members visiting London featuring a talk by our patron Park Honan on 'Jane Austen and Shakespeare, the pleasures of play-reading'; a discussion group on *Mansfield Park* on 13 November held in Albany, W1; and our Birthday luncheon held at the Basil Street Hotel, Knightsbridge, where the toast was proposed by Susan McCartan.

Midlands

Our year followed the usual pattern, starting with the AGM on March 20th. The theme for the year was 'The Sailor Brothers': John Levitt gave a talk entitled 'Sailors and Brothers', Freddie Stitt told us about conditions in the Navy at the time of Jane Austen and, by way of contrast, Lynn Miller from the Wedgwood Museum provided a most interesting insight into the life and working times of Josiah Wedgwood and his successors.

Our summer event took us to the Barber Institute in Birmingham, which houses paintings from medieval times to the present day. Portsmouth was the venue for our autumn tour; Saturday was spent in the dockyard, where we were given a most enjoyable tour of the 18th-century buildings. Lunch was taken aboard HMS *Warrior* (a little late for our period, but fascinating), and the visit closed with a tour of HMS *Victory*. On Sunday we emulated Mrs Price and walked on the ramparts, before departing for Chawton, where we had the rare treat of viewing Jane Austen's letters. The visit closed with a visit to The Vyne.

Jane Austen's birthday was celebrated at Keele Hall, where we enjoyed good food and excellent entertainment.

Dawn Thomas

Northern

The Northern Branch of the Society began its life on 18 September 1999 with the first meeting of our committee and with interest in its existence declared by fifteen people. We have been very active, settling the necessary details of founding a group, and consider ourselves extremely lucky to have Irene Collins as our Patron.

Our single event for 1999 was our inaugural lecture given by Irene at the University of York on 4 December; this was an excellent illustrated talk entitled 'Introducing Jane Austen, an 18th-century Parson's Daughter'. The lecture was well-attended, despite an early fall of snow which prevented a number of people who had bought tickets from joining us. The talk threw up some interesting questions which produced some equally interesting answers from Irene.

We are delighted to say that our efforts seem to be bearing fruit. We have already planned several events for 2000 and now have a membership of 50.

Marilyn Joice, Diane Kearns

Southern Circle

We had a first meeting of the year in March at Chawton, with a discussion of 'favourite' characters, with a wide range of opinions and characters. We met again, as usual, at the AGM where we acted as stewards. In November we met at Manor House School, where we were delightfully entertained by Dom Nicholas Seymour. Attendance at the meeting was very good and Dom Nicholas spoke with fluency and grace about his view of the spiritual side of Jane Austen.

Fiona Ainsworth



Commemorative plaque placed on No. 10 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, on 29 April 1999

Jane Austen's friends at Canterbury Cathedral

Deirdre Le Faye

Whenever Jane visited Edward Knight at Godmersham, sooner or later she would go to Canterbury to call on her brother's friends and family connections, several of whom lived in or near the Cathedral Precincts. In her letters to Cassandra Jane does not explain precisely which houses these people occupied, since naturally she was equally well acquainted with them and their places of residence. At the beginning of the 19th century there were nearly twenty dwelling houses within the Cathedral Precincts – the Deanery, twelve prebendal houses (one for each of the Cathedral's prebendal stalls) and others which had been built privately by canons over the centuries. The Deanery still survives, but four of the prebendal houses were demolished by the Cathedral authorities in the middle of the 19th century as part of their ecclesiastical reforms, and three more were destroyed during the Second World War; hence the layout of the Precincts is rather altered from that which Jane would have known. However, two contemporary sources provide further information on the residents and their houses during the period ca. 1798 to ca. 1814, which enables some of the houses which Jane visited to be identified.

The first source is the diaries of Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys, who was herself an old friend of Jane's mother, and whose daughter Caroline married Jane's first cousin the Revd Edward Cooper.[1] In the summer of 1798 Mr and Mrs Lybbe Powys came to stay with their brother the Revd Dr Thomas Powys, who was then the Dean of Canterbury. On Tuesday 31 July the visitors reached Canterbury at seven in the evening, and 'in driving up to the Deanery through the Green Court, as tis called, of fine elms, we were much struck by its appearance, as instead of the forlorn old brick mansion we had expected, we saw a good-looking white stone house, nine sash windows in front besides the staircase, a venetian one, and on entering found the inside contain'd many capital rooms, modernly furnished... on one side the hall is now a very good eating-room, on the other the library; an excellent staircase which leads to two very noble drawing-rooms. In the first, which is 35 feet by 22, are the pictures of seventeen deans ... [and] two very good ones in the eating-room, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Moore, and North, Bishop of Winchester... In another part of the house is that styled the Archbishop's bed-chamber and dressing-room, and many more, tho' not so large, and in the back part of the house numbers of small ones and spiral staircases, dark passages, &c, &c, which put one in mind of the haunted castles in our present novels, and in that antique style I had formed my idea of the whole house; but as I before said, it has been greatly modernised by one of the late Deans.'

On the next day: 'We that evening drank tea at Dr. Walsby's, one of the prebends; they have an excellent house in the Green Court, close to the Deanery; in their drawing-room a very fine picture of Prince William of Gloucester when young. Dr. Walsby was tutor to his Royal Highness. After tea we all walked to The Oaks, another Green so called, to see the regiments of the York, Hereford, West Kent,

and supplementary militia perform their exercise, and a very pretty sight it was; the music of some of the bands very fine. Colonel Cotterel ... was so obliging as to have his band entertaining the ladies (of whom numbers attend every evening), till half-past nine, always ending with "God Save the King".'

On Sunday 5 August, Mrs Powys attended morning service in the Cathedral, and 'the Archdeacon, Dr. Lynch, preached about twenty-five minutes, a most worthy, good, kind man. After the service was over, at which numbers of regiments attended (as there was then in Canterbury four or five thousand militia), the rest are assembled in the Cathedral churchyard, and walk two by two into the outward part of the Cathedral, as a pulpit has been there erected, and divine service constantly performed to all those who had not been before. Mrs. Bridges [sic] desired me to come to her house to see the procession, as she has a beau [bow] window just near to the great door ...'

'Thursday 9th August: The Dean and Mr. Powys dined at the Archdeacon's, a large party of gentlemen. I went in the evening to a card-party at Mrs. Bridges; only three tables, about thirty-six of us; several ladies from the country. As winter and summer seem quite equal for routs at Canterbury, every evening the card-tables are set out ...'

'Sunday 12th August: At the Cathedral, dined at Dr. Walsby's, went at three to evening service, drank tea at the Doctor's, and after, we all walked to Mrs. Milnes' [sic] at The Oaks, who had desired us to come to her house to see the soldiers exercise, and hear the band play. Mrs. Milnes' house in The Oaks is an ancient mansion, extremely large; indeed, there are a great number of good ones belonging to the church, within the precincts.'

On Sunday 26 August, just before the Lybbe Powys couple returned home, 'the boys at The King's School, all passed thro' the Green Court to the Cathedral, which was a pretty sight from our chamber windows.'

Mrs Lybbe Powys describes the Deanery as being of 'white stone' – but in fact this must have been a cosmetic facelift of stucco and paint, no doubt part of the earlier modernisation to which she refers. Today the house's façade is unadorned and betrays the many alterations it has received over the centuries, as it is an irregular patchwork of red brick and grey flint, with yellow stone dressings. Dr Walsby's prebendal house was No. XII and was demolished in 1851; Dr Lynch, the Archdeacon, had house No. V, which survives and is now known as Linacre House, No. 17 The Precincts. From 1787-1812 Mrs. Brydges rented what is now called Cathedral House (previously No. 11 The Precincts); it is near the west end of the Cathedral and the 'great door' in the high walls which separate the city from the church's property, and still has the very large bow-window noticed by Mrs Lybbe Powys. Mrs Milles's 'ancient mansion' in the Oaks was then the prebendal house No. XI and is now known as Meister Omers, No. 16 The Precincts.

The second source of contemporary information is to be found in the *Reminiscences* of the Revd George Gilbert.[2] Young George (1796-1874) was born in Canterbury and was a King's Scholar from 1808-14 – so unfortunately he was not one of the boys seen in the Green Court by Mrs. Lybbe Powys in 1798. Although

his adult life was spent in the Midlands, he never lost touch with his native city and at the request of his friends wrote his *Reminiscences* between 1864-73 to record something of the history of early 19th-century Canterbury. His text is slightly repetitive, but yields more pen-pictures of life in the Precincts and some of those residents whom Jane Austen knew.

'Dr. Walesby [sic] had been a Norfolk Fellow of Benet Coll. Cambridge and Rector of Lambourne in Essex. At Rome he met Prince William of Gloucester, and the Prince's Tutor dying there, he became his travelling Companion. Hence his preferment to the Stall at Canterbury.

'In the Oaks in [a] house lately belonging to Dr. Russell lived for 50 years Mrs. Charles Milles and her daughter Miss Molly Milles. Mrs C. Milles was first cousin of the Milles's of Nackington. Mr. Surtees, the prebendary, turned her out, and she then resided for some years in Canon Norris' house. Mrs. C.M. died at age of 96 and Miss Molly at 83. She and Mrs Bridges were the great ladies of the Precincts. A Mrs. Percy lived in Mr. Norris' House previously, for the Prebendaries let their houses on condition of the Tenant quitting them for a month annually and leaving furniture etc. for the Canon's use during residence. Mrs. Milles generally went to Tunbridge Wells for 5 weeks during her Landlord's residence... I recollect these two ladies going to Tunbridge in their old chariot with Mr. Muff Bridges, and being overturned etc. He was so named because he in his old age in winter used a small muff... He was of Sir Brook Bridges' family.'

'There is a canonical residence in the Brick Walk [Meister Omers] ... which in my memory was the House of Dr. Williams who married a sister of Sir Wm. Fagge and exchanged for a Canonry at Winchester. He had as successors Dr. Barton, Mr. Surtees, Dr. Russell, Dr. Blakeley. It has several large rooms in it. There has been a noble Room to which you ascended by a circular stone stair of good width. That room when I first knew it had been divided into a lobby, 2 bedrooms and a dressing room and a long gallery containing one of its oriel windows and entered as well from the Lobby as from a good drawing Room. It was charmingly furnished with Indian Cabinets large china Vases, curious tables and screens, a few pictures. The upper end with its oriel had chairs etc. and made a nice summer sitting room. Mrs. Charles Milles and her surviving daughter Miss Molly (the other died young) resided there for 50 years. Mrs. Milles left her house for 5 weeks when the Prebendary came into residence and went to Tunbridge Wells, then the resort of fashionable people. She had a good establishment and her carriage but used post horses. Her livery of green and yellow was very conspicuous. Mr. Surtees after a time gave her notice to quit his house which he then let to a Mrs. Hutchinson. Mrs. M. moved into the house afterwards occupied by Mr. G. Curteis in Burgate and was allowed a garden door into the Precincts, that house having been built for Mrs. Walseby's sister Miss Blisset. But after a time, Mrs. Milles obtained Prebendary Norris' House in the Oaks where she finished her days, Mr. Norris boarding with her when he came for his month's residence. She lived to the great age of 96 and came to the Cathedral to the very last. Miss Molly was exactly 20 years younger, and lived about 10 or 12 years after her mother's decease. I recollect Mrs. M. (when above 90 and we



Green Court, Canterbury by W. Westall A.R.A., engraved by Edward Finden

were drinking tea with her in Mr. Norris' House) – saying to my Mother – "Mrs. Gilbert don't you think that Molly stoops very much? Molly, my dear, do hold yourself up." Molly was then above 70 years of age. Mrs. Milles was the great lady of the Precincts next to Mrs. Bridges, and had been intimate with dignified clergy and county families from her youth. It was considered that Mr Surtees, who did not reside except for a month, treated her ill in turning her out of a House in which she had resided so long. She was as upright as a dart, and at 78 broke her leg by slipping off the curb when entering the Theatre – All people, clergy and laity, frequented the Theatre in those days. The King's Scholars always bespoke a play, and begged their friends and others to take tickets.'

Meister Omers House is now used by The King's School, and the noble room on the first floor has become a dormitory. The house built by Dr. Walsby for Miss Blisset, round about 1803, is that now known as No. 14C The Precincts, on the south side of The Oaks. The building still fronts Burgate Street and has its garden entrance on the Cathedral side, but earlier this century the house was divided vertically; the street frontage is now a restaurant called the Tudor Tavern, and there is no way through it to the Precincts.[3] The Revd Mr Norris had the prebendal house No. IX, which was destroyed in 1942.

Of the people mentioned in these two sources, most appear in Jane's letters. In 1808 she makes only a passing reference to Dean Powys, but as he was a childhood friend of Mrs Austen and in later years stood godfather to Jane's brother Henry, Jane would always have called upon him whenever he and she were in Canterbury at the same time.[4] Dr Lynch's name appears as early as 1796[5] and Dr Walsby and his wife are mentioned in 1808.[6] Old Mrs Brydges, mother of Jane's great friend Madam Lefroy, is mentioned in 1798 and 1808.[7] Mrs Charles Milles and her daughter Molly, who sound remarkably like the inspiration for Mrs and Miss Bates in *Emma,* are mentioned several times between 1805 and 1817.[8] Some are only casual references to calling upon them, but one of these references, in 1808, gives the clue that they had moved to No 14C The Precincts: '... we finished with Mrs C. Milles, who luckily was not at home, & whose new House is a very convenient short cut from the Oaks to the W. Friars. - We found Mrs Knight up & better...' Jane would have walked in from the garden door, then out into Burgate Street, down Canterbury Lane and across St George's Street to the short lane leading into the Whitefriars' grounds.

Other references are more specific. In October 1813 Jane told Cassandra: 'We had our dinner party on Wedy. with the addition of Mrs & Miss Milles... Both Mother & Daughter are much as I have always found them. - I like the Mother, 1st because she reminds me of Mrs. Birch [one of Mrs Austen's girlhood friends] & 2dly because she is chearful & grateful for what she is at the age of 90 & upwards.' A few days later Jane went to Canterbury with Edward and his sister-in-law Mrs Harriot Moore, and wrote: ' *Our* cheif Business was to call on Mrs. Milles, & we had indeed so little else to do that we were obliged to saunter about anywhere & go backwards & forwards as much as possible to make out the Time & keep ourselves from having two hours to sit with the good Lady. A most

extraordinary circumstance in a Canterbury Morng.! ...Miss Milles was queer as usual & provided us with plenty to laugh at. She undertook in *three words* to give us the history of Mrs. Scudamore's reconciliation, & then talked on about it for half an hour, using such odd expressions & so foolishly minute that I could hardly keep my countenance.'

The final reference to Mrs and Miss Milles was written by Jane from her sickbed, in March 1817, to Fanny Knight at Godmersham, who had just told her that Mrs Milles had died on 6 March: 'Poor Mrs C Milles, that she should die on a wrong day at last, after being about it so long! – It was unlucky that the Goodnestone Party could not meet you, & I hope her friendly, obliging, social Spirit, which delighted in drawing People together, was not conscious of the division & disappointment she was occasioning. I am sorry & surprised that you speak of her as having little to leave, & must feel for Miss Milles, though she *is* Molly, if a material loss of Income is to attend her other loss.'

Mr Muff Bridges is not mentioned by Jane, so perhaps he was an elderly bachelor who lived alone in Canterbury and did not keep in close touch with his younger relations, Sir Brook Bridges's family at Goodnestone. One other person whom Jane called upon in 1808, but who is not mentioned by either Mrs Lybbe Powys or George Gilbert, was Mrs Moore, widow (1805) of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[9] Her son, the Revd George Moore, was a wealthy pluralist who preferred to reside upon his living of Wrotham, which meant that his prebendal house No. VI in the Precincts was available for his mother's use; it was however demolished in 1845.

Notes

1. Mrs Emily J. Climenson, ed., *Passages from the Diaries of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys of Harwick House, Oxon AD 1756 to 1808* (London, 1899), pp 303-09. See also Maggie Lane, 'The Very Reverend Thomas Powys' in the Jane Austen Society *Collected Reports 1986 -95,* pp. 290-94.
2. Revd John Shirley, ed., *The Reminiscences of the Revd George Gilbert 1796-1874* (Canterbury, 1938) pp. 22-23.
3. I take this opportunity of thanking once again Mrs Margaret Sparks and Mr Andrew Webster for information and hospitality during my researches in Canterbury in 1996.
4. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford, 1995), p.130.
5. *Letters,* p.9.
6. *Letters,* p.136.
7. *Letters,* pp. 26, 129, 134.
8. *Letters,* pp. 107, 112, 129-130, 134, 193, 225, 233, 244-45, 332.
9. *Letters,* pp. 134, 136.

More on 'Sophia Sentiment'

Robin Vick

Ever since Sir Zachary Cope suggested the possibility (in the Summer 1966 edition of *The Book Collector)* there has been an increasing acceptance of the view that the letter signed by 'Sophia Sentiment' which appeared in the ninth number of *The Loiterer (28* March 1789), edited at Oxford by James Austen, was written by James's thirteen year old sister Jane. Sir Zachary's persuasive reasoning was summarised by John Gore in the *Annual Report* of the Jane Austen Society for 1966.

Claire Tomalin, however, has recently offered a dissenting opinion : 'The trouble with attributing this to her is that the letter is not an encouragement to *The Loiterer* to address women readers so much as a mockery of women's poor taste in literature. "Sophia Sentiment" is more likely to have been a transvestite, Henry or James [Austen].'

One small but perhaps significant piece of circumstantial evidence can be added to support Sir Zachary's case. When *The Loiterer* was launched it was advertised in Jackson's *Oxford Journal* of 31 January 1789: 'This Day is published, Number 1 of THE LOITERER. To be continued Weekly. Price Threepence. Printed for C.S.RANN, in the High Street, Oxford.' At the end of its run another advertisement was placed in the *Oxford Journal* of 24 April 1790: 'Speedily will be published in 2 Vols. Octavo, THE LOITERER, A PERIODICAL WORK, By the Rev. JAMES AUSTEN, A.M. Fellow of St JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD. Printed for the Author : And sold by . . . . [etc.]. 1790.'

As far as can be ascertained, no other advertisement either for the collected edition or for any individual number appeared in the *Oxford Journal* or any other newspaper, with one surprising exception – the *Reading Mercury* of 6 April 1789:

> This day was published, price 3d.
> (To be continued weekly)
> No. IX of
> The LOITERER
> Printed for the Author and sold by C.S.Rann, Oxford; Mess. Egertons, Whitehall, London; Mess. Pearson and Rollason, Birmingham; Mr. Meyler, Bath; and Mess. Smart and Cowslade, Reading.
> Of whom may be had any of the former Numbers.

Why was *only* Number 9 advertised, and why only in the *Reading Mercury*? It is true that the paper's full title was the *Reading Mercury & Oxford Gazette* but this was largely for historical reasons, having been founded in Oxford in 1723. Long before 1789 its circulation was mostly confined to Berkshire, north Hampshire, north east Wiltshire, north west Surrey and the southern parts of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire around Henley and Marlow (it did, however, regularly publish lists of degrees awarded by Oxford University). The *Reading Mercury* was certainly seen by Jane Austen; on 8 January 1799, for instance, she informed her sister

This day was published, price 3d.
(To be continued weekly)
No. IX of

The LOITERER.

Printed for the Author, and sold by C. S. Rann, Oxford; Meſſ. Egertons, Whitehall, London; Meſſ. Pearſon and Rollaſon, Birmingham; Mr. Meyler, Bath; and Meſſ. Smart and Cowslade, Reading.

Of whom may be had, any of the former Numbers.

SINGING.

WOKINGHAM, April 4, 1789.

IN the month of June will be ſung for, in the Town-hall, A handſome SILVER CUP, (given by Mr. Richard Creaker.) Each company to ſing 3 three-voice ſongs or glees, and one catch; no leſs than three companies to ſings without permiſſion from the donor. Each company to chuſe their umpire.

At the ſame time will be given, A handſome SILVER PUNCH LADLE, to be ſung for by ſingle voices. No objection to inſtruments. Each candidate to ſing three ſongs or cantatas. The ſinging to be decided by the majority of the company.

There will be a dinner provided by Mr Creaker, at the Ship, on table at one, and no perſon allowed to ſing or be an umpire but what dines; and each company to declare their intention of ſinging before they go to the Hall, at three o'clock.—Admittance One Shilling each.

The time fixed will appear in ſome future paper.

BLACKSMITH's SHOP.

TO be LETT, and entered upon immediately, A BLACKSMITH's SHOP, now in full trade, ſituate at Waltham St. Lawrence, in the county of Berks.

For further particulars, enquire of Richard Silver, on the premiſes

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TO be SOLD by AUCTION,
By Mr. RING,

At the George Inn in Odiham, on Friday the 10th day of April inſtant, between the hours of two and five o'clock in the afternoon, A Subſtantial Brick-built Slated DWELLING-HOUSE, conſiſting of a parlour, kitchen, brew-houſe, and three chambers over; with a good garden walled and fenced in, and planted with fruit trees, and two fuel-houſes detached, all in good repair, pleaſantly ſituated in Odiham, on an eminence commanding a pleaſant proſpect, and now in the ſeveral occupations of Sarah Vickery, widow, and George Draper, labourer.

For further particulars, enquire of Mr. Raggett, attorney at law, Odiham.

Foreſt Repoſitory, Wokingham.

TO be SOLD by AUCTION,
By Mr. COLLINS,

On Tueſday the 14th inſtant, The HUSBANDRY UTENSILS, and ſome HOUSHOLD FURNITURE; the property of a perſon lately declined buſineſs; conſiſting of a good market waggon almoſt new, two 6 inch tier dung carts, a marketing cart with tilt complete, three other carts, two ploughs, drags, three pair of trace harneſs, a corn ſereen, ſereen ſieves, &c. &c.

Sale to begin at 11 o'clock.

(who was staying in Kent) that 'Mr. Ludlow & Miss Pugh of Andover are lately married, & so is Mrs. Skeete of Basingstoke & Mr. French, Chemist of Reading' [2] – events which were reported in the previous day's *Reading Mercury* but in no other newspaper. A glance at the advertisements demonstrates the paper's sphere of influence and makes clear that it rather than the *Hampshire Chronicle,* published in Winchester, was considered to be *the* local paper for north Hampshire. When the sale of the Austens' possessions took place at Steventon in 1801, for example, it was advertised only in the *Reading Mercury.* Quasi-official confirmation of the paper's status in the area is found in the record of the '... first Petty Sessions [for impressing vagrants into the Royal Navy] held in ... the Town of Basingstoke ... at the Town Hall there on Tuesday the 16th day of June 1795 ... Notice of which first sessions having been previously given by Charles Best Town Clerk and Clerk of the Peace in and for the said Town by the direction of the said Thomas Robins Mayor in the *Reading Mercury & Oxford Gazette being the Newspaper usually circulated within the Jurisdiction of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said Town ...*' [3]

To return to the question at the beginning of the above paragraph, a possible explanation could be that 'Sophia Sentiment' was indeed Jane Austen, and that either or both of her brothers James and Henry (who also contributed to *The Loiterer)* arranged for the advertisement to be placed where they knew that she, her family and their neighbours would see it, to enhance the pleasure she must have felt on seeing her first words in print.

Notes

1. Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen, A Life* (London, 1997), p. 63.
2. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford, 1995), p.35.

He danced too ill

Robin Vick

Writing of a ball at Kempshott Park in 1799, Jane Austen told her sister Cassandra that 'One of my gayest actions was sitting down two Dances in preference to having Lord Bolton's eldest son for my Partner, who danced too ill to be endured.'[1] The refusal (and apparent satisfaction in giving it) anticipates a passage in *The Watsons* in which Emma turns down the proposal to dance of Tom Musgrave, acting as Lord Osborne's surrogate. Lord Osborne, though 'a very fine young man', had an air 'of awkwardness about him, which seemed to speak him out of his element in a ball-room.'[2]

Jane's action at Kempshott was perhaps less praiseworthy than that of Emma Watson. Whereas the latter was pre-engaged, Jane had no comparable excuse; she merely thought, like Mr Darcy at the Meryton assembly, that it would be a

punishment to her to stand up with William Orde-Powlett. Evidently she did not consider that his age (he was just sixteen, Jane twenty-three) merited the sympathetic treatment accorded by Emma Watson to the ten-year-old Charles Blake.

That he 'danced too ill to be endured' may not have been Orde-Powlett's only fault. In October 1801 he was sent as a pupil to Sydney Smith in Edinburgh who reported that 'young Powlett is about 19, awkward, and reserved, and not of interesting appearance'. In November Smith thought him ' a very eccentric being, but I am in hopes I shall make something of him'; but the following January 'Mr Powlett ran away, and behaved in so extraordinary a manner, that I was forced to desire Lord Bolton to remove him immediately.'[3]

William Orde-Powlett succeeded his father as the second Lord Bolton in 1807. He married Maria, eldest daughter of Lord Dorchester (his Kempshott host) in 1810, and died without issue in 1850.

Notes

1. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters*, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1995), p.35.
2. Jane Austen, *The Watsons*, in *Minor Works* (Oxford, 1954, ed R.W.Chapman; rev. B. C. Southam, 1982), p.329.
3. Quoted in Alan Bell, *Sydney Smith* (Oxford, 1980).

Jane Austen and Douglas

Margaret Wilson

Among the plays with which Jane Austen was familiar is *Douglas* by the Scottish writer John Home (1722-1808) and there is evidence it featured in family theatricals in her lifetime. The play was first performed at Edinburgh in 1756 and staged at Covent Garden the following year. The play is a romantic tragedy based on a Scottish ballad; a shepherd, old Norval, brings up the infant son of Douglas whom his mother thought was dead. She marries Lord Randolph, whose life is saved by the young Norval; the latter is reunited with his mother, only to be slain by the plotting of Lord Randolph's villainous heir. In despair Lady Randolph hurls herself off a cliff.

Jane mentions the play in *Mansfield Park* when the Bertrams and their friends are trying to decide what to perform in their amateur theatricals. Tom Bertram recalls the plays which his father encouraged them to know: 'How many a time have we mourned over the dead body of Julius Caesar, and *to be'd* and *not to be'd,* in this very room, for his amusement! And I am sure, *my name was Norval,* every evening of my life through one Christmas holidays.' Tom and his friends rejected *Douglas* as unsatisfactory, along with *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Othello.*

The reference to the Bertrams knowing the play through lengthy holiday rehearsals has an interesting parallel in the family of Jane's brother, Edward

Knight. There is a mention of it on a sheet of paper in the diary for 1805 of her favourite niece, Fanny. She describes how, among other items, a scene 'out of Douglas' was performed in an evening entertainment by Fanny herself and two of her brothers just before Christmas. Edward, aged eleven, played Young Norval, George, aged ten, Lord Randolph, and Fanny, then twelve, Lady Randolph. 'The pieces', she writes, 'were performed uncommonly well as we were afterwards told.' Emboldened by this success, the performance was repeated to a larger audience of relatives in January.

Aunt Jane was not present on either occasion but there is a clue to her influence in the events of the previous summer, when she was staying with the Knights along with her niece Anna (later Lefroy) and joined in acting little plays with the children. Jane's encouragement may well have influenced them to try something more ambitious in the next holidays. It is very likely that she heard about the success of *Douglas* from the children, their parents or her brother Henry, who witnessed the January occasion. Preparation must have been just as intensive at Godmersham as it was at Mansfield Park – there were only four days separating the arrival of the scripts from the first performance. Maybe the episode reinforced, or even created, the picture of a family endlessly rehearsing *Douglas,* which Jane used some six years later in Tom Bertram's remark.

Note

The quotation from Fanny Knight's diary (U951 F24/2) is by kind permission of Lord

The Hancocks

Robin Vick

> The eldest daughter [Miss Wynne] had been obliged to accept the offer of one of her cousins to equip her for the East Indies, and tho' infinitely against her inclinations had been necessitated to embrace the only possibility that was offered to her, of a Maintenance;... Her personal Attractions had gained her a husband as soon as she had arrived at Bengal, and she had now been married nearly a twelvemonth. Splendidly, yet unhappily married. United to a Man of double her own age, whose disposition was not amiable, and whose Manners were unpleasing, though his character was respectable.

This passage from *Catharine, or the Bower* (dedicated to her sister Cassandra in August 1792) is assumed to allude to the marriage of Jane Austen's aunt Philadelphia – the sister of her father George – to Tysoe Saul Hancock. The circumstances of Miss Wynne and Philadelphia Austen were certainly similar and Jane Austen's use of the episode in her juvenilia was probably not coincidental.

Details of the married life of the Hancocks and their daughter Eliza, later the

wife of Jane's brother Henry, are too well knovn (from the *Austen Papers* and most modern biographies) to need re-telling. Much less is known about Tysoe Saul Hancock before his marriage to Philadelphia at Cuddalore on 22 February 1753 and an investigation into his origins has shown that in one respect the factual and fictional versions of the marriage do not agree.

Until now it has been thought that Tysoe Saul Hancock was born in 1711 on the strength of an unconfirmed reading of a tombstone inscription in Calcutta which once apparently showed that he was aged 64 at his death in November 1775. Philadelphia was 22 when she married and if the tombstone was correct Hancock would have been 42, near enough 'double her own age'; but, according to Philip Dormer Stanhope, writing in October 1774,[1] 'Mr Hancock, whose general knowledge of mankind renders him a most agree able companion, ... though upwards of fifty years of age still retains all the fire and pleasantry of youth'.

Perhaps the epitaph was misread, perhaps it was just plain wrong. Whoever was responsible for raising the stone (his wife was in England) may not have known his true age and guessed at it, basing the guess on Hancock's appearance and valetudinarian demeanour, for, despite Stanhope's assertion one year earlier that 'he retains all the fire and pleasantry of youth', Hancock's own letters at this time certainly give the impression of decrepitude. In fact, Tysoe Saul Hancock was born in 1723. He was 29 when he married and Philadelphia's senior by little more than six years.

The parish register of Sittingbourne in Kent contains the entry: 'Tysoe Saul son of Thomas Saul Hancock and Elizabeth his wife born on Christmas Day near 5 o'clock in the evening and baptised 10 January 1723 [1724 by modern reckoning, using the Gregorian calendar].'[2]

Tysoe's father, the Revd Thomas Saul Hancock, was born at St Martin-in-the-Fields in 1696, the son of Thomas Hancock, a citizen and harness-maker of London, and Jane his wife (Thomas was the son of a Warwickshire shoemaker). After attending Christ's Hospital as a 'Grecian', he entered Trinity College, Cambridge in February 1715/16, became a Scholar in 1718, graduated BA in 1719/20 and MA in 1723. He was ordained deacon at Lincoln in 1719/20 and priest 1720/21, becoming Rector of Wormshill in Kent in 1721 and Vicar of nearby Hollingbourne in 1727 (both parishes were within a few miles of Sittingbourne), holding these livings until his death in 1741.[3] Besides Tysoe Saul, the Revd Thomas Saul and Elizabeth Hancock had at least five other children: Thomas (1727), John (1728), Olivia (1731), Colbron 1733) and William (1738). Thomas was born at Harrietsham (adjacent to Hollingbourne), the four others at Hollingbourne.

Like his father and at least one of his brothers (Thomas), Tysoe Saul Hancock probably received his early education at Christ's Hospital. On 10th February 1737/38 he was apprenticed for 7 years to Peter Liege, 'an eminent surgeon of Holles Street, Cavendish Square', his father paying a premium of sixty guineas.[4] Having completed his training as a surgeon in 1745, he set sail for India.

There are brief references to two of his siblings in his letters from India. On 23 November 1769 Hancock wrote to his wife, 'I shall write to Olivia, at present I

cannot determine whether to withdraw her Allowance or not, in Justice to my own Family I ought to do it yet it pierces my heart to think of what the poor Creature must Suffer by it.'[5] By his will dated 1774 he left instructions for Olivia to be paid an annuity of £30 per annum if his estate should be able to bear it, but poor Olivia received nothing. She subsequently married Robert Lightfoot, a mariner, at St John Margate in 1775 and was still living at Margate when she was mentioned in the will of Philadelphia Hancock, who died in 1792.

On 13 March 1771 Hancock had written to Philadelphia to say that 'One of my brother Colbron's letters mentions the death of Sally Walter'[6] and in 1780 Philadelphia was writing to Warren Hastings: 'Has my Uncle given you any Account of the Money left in his Hands? – about two thousand pounds, I imagine, besides my brother Hancock's Bond which I fear we shall see little of.'[7] The fear was well founded; on 26 December 1781 John Woodman wrote to Warren Hastings about the Hancocks' affairs: 'Mr Hancock of Charing Cross, being become a bankrupt, and there being a debt I believe of fifteen hundred pounds due to his brother Mr. Tysoe S. Hancock besides interest...'[8]

Prior to his bankruptcy, Colbron Hancock had been listed in London trade directories as a cut-glass manufacturer of Cockspur Street, Charing Cross.[9] The business seems to have continued uninterrupted by the bankruptcy at Cockspur Street, being run by Colbron's wife Ann and then, from 1786, by Hancock & Shepherd. By 1808 Hancock & Shepherd, still at No. 1 Cockspur Street, were styled 'cut glass manufacturers to the Duke of York & the Emperor of Russia'. An additional partner had been taken by 1814, when the firm was known as Hancock, Shepherd and Rixon (Philadelphia Hancock's account at Hoare's Bank had recorded a number of small but regular payments to an Elizabeth Rixon, so there may have been a family connection). By this time, and probably from well before, the Hancock in question was presumably a son of Colbron.

In June 1814 a magnificent ball was given at Burlington House by White's Club, and attended by Jane Austen's brother Henry ('Henry at Whites! – Oh! what a Henry' Jane remarked in a letter of 23 June 1814). The total expenditure on the event was just under £10,000; £473 was spent on candles, and no less than £800 was paid to 'Hancock & Co for lustres'.[10] Had Eliza Austen, who had died in 1813, lived another year and accompanied her husband to the ball, she might not have wished it to be known that her own cousin was the tradesman responsible for the lighting arrangements.

In 1861 the firm (now 'Hancock & Rixon, chandelier, lamp and glass manufacturer to her Majesty & the Royal Family') was still at Cockspur Street, but by 1880 had moved to Great Marlborough Street and was styled 'glass & lamp manufacturers, oil merchants & contractors & ship owners'. By 1900 they were also electrical engineers; by 1920 the business had been sold to J. Meek, who continued to trade as Hancock & Rixon at Great Marlborough Street.

If little has hitherto been known about Tysoe Saul Hancock before his life in India, the same could be said of his wife Philadelphia, sister of the Revd George Austen. We know that she was baptised at Tonbridge on 15 May 1730, and that after

the early death of her parents she may have been cared for by the Freeman family (relations of her mother) before leaving for India in the *Bombay Castle* in January 1752. A recent discovery now throws some interesting light on her early years.

On 9 May 1745 a 'Philadelpha Austen' was apprenticed for the term of five years to Hester Cole of Covent Garden, Middlesex, milliner, though the premium of £45 was not paid, nor the indentures registered, until 8 November 1748.[11] The column in the register of indentures in which her parents' names should have been recorded was left blank, indicating that both parents were dead. This circumstance. combined with the comparative rarity of the name and the suitability of the date, strongly suggests that the milliner's apprentice was indeed Jane Austen's aunt.

Whatever view one takes of the nature of Philadelphia Hancock's later friendship with Warren Hastings, and the paternity of her daughter Eliza,[12] it has to be said that Covent Garden milliners at this time had a most unfortunate, though deserved, reputation with regard to moral character. This is well illustrated by John Cleland's *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (published in 1748/49, during Philadelphia's term of apprenticeship), though it would be unsafe to draw any conclusions from the coincidence of name and place:

> But as the time approached for me to come to some resolution how to dispose of myself), and I was considering round where to shift my quarters to, Mrs Cole, a middle-aged discreet sort of woman, ... came to offer her cordial advice and service to me ... I could not have put myself into worse or better hands in all London: into worse, because keeping a house of conveniency, there were no lengths in lewdness she would not advise me to go to, in compliance with her customers...; into better, because nobody having had more experience of the wicked part of the town than she had, was fitter to advise and guard one against the worst dangers of our profession; ... She was really too a gentlewoman born and bred, but through a train of accidents reduced to this course, which she pursued: ... and she was consummately at the top of her profession, and dealt only with customers of distinction; ...This useful gentlewoman, ... sent a friend of hers, on the day appointed for my removal, to conduct me to my new lodgings at a brush-makers in R____ street Covent-Garden, the very next door to her own house ... the next morning Mrs Cole came and took me to her house for the first time.
>
> Here, at the first sight of things, I found everything breathe an air of decency. modesty and order.
>
> In the outer parlour, or rather shop, sat three young women, very demurely employed on millenary work, which was the cover of a traffic in more precious commodities: ... '[13]

Notes

1. R.A. Austen-Leigh, *Austen Papers* (London, 1942), p.325.
2. I am grateful to Deirdre Le Faye for bringing this entry to my attention.
3. Alumni Cantab.
4. PRO: IR.l/15/151. *DNB*, sub Joseph Moser.
5. *Austen Papers,* p.39.

6. Ibid., p.54.
7. Ibid., p.86.
8. Ibid., p.98.
9. At the Guildhall Library, London.
10. P. Colson, *White's,1693 - 1950* (London, 1951), pp 68-69.
11. PRO: IR 1/18/146.
12. For discussion of this matter see, for example George Holbert Tucker, *A Goodly Heritage* (Manchester,1983), pp. 39-41 and Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen, A Life* (London, 1997), pp.16-19.
13. John Cleland, *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, ed. Peter Wagner (Harmondsworth, 1985), pp. 124-25, 131.

Mr Austen's Carriage

Robin Vick

Jane Austen's father, the Revd George Austen, is thought to have acquired a carriage in 1798, just three years before he relinquished his parochial duties and left Steventon for Bath. The evidence for this date, however, is decidedly circumstantial; it rests upon a statement written many years later by Jane's niece Anna Lefroy:

> About the time of Mr Henry Austen's Marriage with his first Wife his father set up a carriage which, not unnaturally, bore on its pannels [sic] the family crest: namely, a Stag on a Crown Mural. The Latter circumstance was accounted for, in his own way, by a neighbouring Squire, who reported that 'Mr Austen had put a coronet on his carriage because of his son's being married of a French Countess'[1]

Henry Austen had married his widowed cousin, Eliza de Feuillide, on 31 December 1797. It is known from the notice in the newspaper advertising the sale at Steventon parsonage in 1801 that the carriage in question was a 'well made Chariot (with box to take off) and Harness'[2] but evidently it had not been in use for several years. On 17 November 1798 Jane had written to her sister Cassandra: 'Our assemblies have very kindly declined ever since we *laid down the carriage*, so that dis-convenience and dis-inclination to go have kept pace together.'[3]

George Austen displayed a remarkable lack of forethought if he bought the carriage in early 1798 only to decide a few months later that he could not afford to run it; but the decision to buy one at all at this time seems rather perverse. By 1798 he had ceased to take pupils, lessening both his need for a carriage and the income to help pay for it. His own semi-public activities (though he was not a magistrate, the local newspaper recorded a number of administrative meetings at Basingstoke connected with local affairs at which he was present) had dwindled away; and, like Mr Bennet, he seems to have had little appetite for visiting his neighbours. There is, in fact, some evidence to suggest that the carriage had been purchased in *1784*.

How then can Anna Lefroy's statement be reconciled?

While noting that the Lefroy MS is not always reliable and should be treated with caution, it is worth stressing that the neighbouring squire reported that 'Mr. Austen had put a coronet *on his carriage'*, which perhaps implies the carriage's pre-existence. There would have been good reason in 1798 to have one's arms painted on one's carriage (if they were not there already), or re-painted (if they had become too faded). In the spring budget of that year the government, always in search of new methods of revenue-raising to fund the war with France, had proposed a tax on the use of armorial bearings. It was to take effect from 25 June and levied an annual charge of two guineas on 'any Person keeping a Coach or other Carriage upon which any Duty under the Management of the Commissioners for the Affairs of Taxes is chargeable and on which any Armorial Bearing, or Ensign, shall be painted, marked or affixed.' The penalty for evasion was £20.[4] To continue to drive a carriage in deeply conservative north Hampshire *without Arms* after this time would have signalled either that the owner had no entitlement to any (that is, he was not a gentleman) or that he did not wish to pay the tax in support of Pitt's government and the prosecution of the war (just as many Foxites had forsworn the use of recently-taxed hair powder). Neither option would have appealed to George Austen. For many patriotic Tory carriage owners in less affluent circumstances, however, this latest imposition (the carriages themselves, and the horses required to pull them, were already subject to separate taxes) was too much. Government recognised their concern but was unwilling to repeal the Act; instead, it formulated a procedure whereby a carriage could be 'laid down', and so not liable to *armorial* duty in *the following year,* without actually being disposed of.[5] Mr Austen probably fell within this category.

The evidence for the acquisition of a carriage in 1784 is derived from entries in George Austen's account at Hoare's Bank.[6] Three payments within a few days of each other are of particular interest:

1784	June 12	To Rd Smith	£10:00:00
	June 14	To T. G.Waller	£27:14:00
	June 14	To George Rogers	£32:17:00

(No other payments from the account were made between 4 June and 24 July.)

T.G.Waller, to whom payments were made once or twice a year between 1783 and 1790, is readily identifiable as Thomas Goodridge Waller, a mercer and linen draper (and later a banker) of Winchester, and it seems probable that the other two payees were also of that place. In 1772 the brothers George and William Rogers paid £420 for premises in Kingsgate Street, Winchester where they jointly ran a successful coachmaking business until their deaths in 1811 and 1810 respectively. Mr Austen's account also shows the following payments:

1793 May 29	To Geo. Rogers	£25:10:00
1793 Nov. 23	To Wm Rogers	£17:17:00
1795 July 4	To G. & W. Rogers	£25:07:06

Richard Smith is listed at Winchester in Bailey's 1783 *Directory* as a 'Saddler's

Ironmonger and Harness-maker'. He died in 1791 and was succeeded in the business by his son, also Richard.[8]

Taken separately, the names 'Richard Smith' and 'George Rogers' are too common to identify with certainty; but in conjunction it is justifiable to suggest that they were the suppliers of George Austen's carriage and its equipment. The amount paid was certainly in line with the cost of a 'chariot', as numerous newspaper advertisements of the period bear out. (The later payments in 1793 and 1795 may have been for refurbishment or repairs, or perhaps even for a replacement carriage taking the trade-in value of the old one into consideration. No payments are shown in the account for 1797 and 1798 which could have related to the purchase of a carriage.) The following example from April 1798 must have been similar to Mr Austen's – indeed, it may even have *been* the Austen carriage, given that the sale was being handled by an innkeeper at Overton (a few miles from Steventon) and by another member (Charles) of the Rogers of Winchester family who had recently set up a branch of the business in Andover:

> A remarkable Light Post Chariot
> TO be SOLD, in perfect condition (lately new lined with fine blue cloth), one of the lightest Post Chariots in England, with one of the new-invented boxes, upon an improved principle, to take off and on together with Harness for a pair of Horses: also a very good TAXED CART and Harness, which has been built about a twelve month; equal to a chair for use and appearance, the shafts being lance wood, and the back railed.
> To prevent trouble, the lowest price of the Chariot and Harness is Thirty Guineas, and the Taxed Cart Ten Guineas.
> N.B. The above carriage is extremely well calculated for an innkeeper. Enquire of Mr. Hankin, at the White Hart Inn, Overton; or of Mr. Rogers, Coach-Maker, Andover.[9]

If this was the Austens' chariot, however, it failed to sell (they could not have picked a worse time to offer it) for it stayed in their possession, in its 'laid-down' state, while they remained at Steventon.

Notes

1. Lefroy MS., cited in Deirdre Le Faye, *Jane Austen . A Family Record* (London, 1989), p.96.
2. Robin Vick, 'The Sale at Steventon Parsonage', *Annual Report of the Jane Austen Society*, 1993, p.14.
3. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford :1995), p. 20.
4. *The Times,* 26 April 1798.
5. *Reading Mercury,* 27 August 1798 and 8 January 1799.
6. I am grateful to the partners of C. Hoare & Co. for allowing me lengthy access to their ledgers, and to Lady Cleone Versen for her help and guidance.
7. Hampshire Record Office :13 M 85W/147-151.
8. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 3 October 1791.
9. *Reading Mercury,* 16 April 1798.

Mr Austen's Insurance Policy

Deirdre Le Faye

An enormous number of Policy Registers, containing records of the insurance policies issued during the years 1710-1862 by the Sun Insurance Office, are now kept in the archives of the City of London at the Guildhall Library. Unfortunately the index volumes to these Registers were long ago destroyed, but in Vol. MS.11936/178 it has been possible to find information regarding the insurance cover Mr George Austen paid for in 1768, as follows:

No. 252581	2nd Janry. 1768	
12/-	The Revd George Austen of Dean in the County of	
Xmas/1768	Southampton on his Household Goods in his now	
Russell	Dwelling House only situated as aforesaid Brick and	
	Tiled not exceeding three hundred pounds	£300
	On his Parsonage House only at Steventon in the	
	County aforesaid at present empty Brick Brick	
	Pannelled and Tiled except part of the South side	
	Plaister and Weather Tiled not exceeding three	
	Hundred Pounds	£300
		~~£600~~

J. Berwick, Pigou, C. Pole
See Ind. No. 18.P.194

The construction of the buildings was mentioned in order to decide the degree of risk involved for the Sun to cover. Common Insurances were defined as brick or stone buildings with tiled, slated, or lead roofs, and there were also classes for 'Hazardous' and 'Doubly Hazardous' cover, depending upon the construction of the building and the use to which the premises were put. The premium for Common Insurances was two shillings/per cent for up to £1,000, hence Mr. Austen's payment of 12s. [£0.60 in modern currency] for £600 total value.[1]

There is no specific mention in Mr. Austen's account at Hoare's Bank for this payment to the Sun; but 'Cash' to the amount of £82.13s. is credited to his account on 19th November 1767. Did Mr Austen perhaps travel to London to deposit this sum personally, and then call at the Sun's offices in the City to take out his policy for the forthcoming year, and pay for it on the spot?

Notes

1. P.G.M. Dickson, *The Sun Insurance Office 1710-1960* (Oxford, 1960), p.84.

Another book owned by Mr Austen

Deirdre Le Faye

'My father has got above 500 Volumes to dispose of;–' so Jane Austen wrote to her sister Cassandra early in 1801,[1] when the Revd George Austen was planning to retire from active parochial duties at Steventon and settle in Bath. It has always been a matter of great regret to Austenian scholars that no list exists of Mr Austen's library, hence it cannot be known what books were available at home for Jane to read during her formative years. Only a very few surviving books can be related with reasonable certainty to the ownership of either Jane Austen's father or brothers;[2] but now one more, even though not Mr Austen's personal copy, can be identified: William Tunnicliff's *Topographical Survey of the Counties of Hants, Wilts, Dorset, Somerset, Devon & Cornwall /Commonly called the Western Circuit* (Salisbury, 1791).

The Western Circuit is a road book, but with more text than maps, covering the six south-western counties of England as given in its title. Each county is dealt with in a separate section, containing a tinted map of the county; a brief description of each of the more important roads, which also mentions the gentlemen's seats in the vicinity; a list of the nobility, gentry and subscribers; and a section at the end of the book devoted to the coats-of-arms of those families mentioned therein. In Hampshire the Revd George Austin [sic] DD, of Steventon, is listed as a subscriber, and his rectory is given a brief mention on p. 2, as lying off the Whitchurch to Basingstoke road, while his coat-of-arms is given on p. 4 of the heraldic section. The names of many of the other Hampshire subscribers are all familiar from Jane Austen's letters: the nobility include the Duke of Bolton at Hackwood Park, the Earl of Portsmouth at Hurstbourne Park, Lord Rivers at Stratfield Saye Park, Lord John Russell at Stratton Park, the Revd Sir Richard Cope, Bt, at Bramshill Park, Sir Thomas Miller, Bt, of Froyle, Sir William Heathcote, Bt, of Hursley, Sir H.P. St John Mildmay, Bt, of Dogmersfield. The gentry include the Revd Mr Austen, and continue with Wither Bramston and William Chute (though rather oddly their addresses are not given), John Cross Crooke of Kempshott House, John Harwood of Dean [sic] Manor, James Holder of Ash [sic] Park, Thomas Knight of Chawton House, Gosport to Alton road, the Revd George Lefroy of Ash, John Lovett of Overton House, Joseph Russell of Grewel [sic – now Greywell] Hill, Basingstoke to Farnham road, T.L. Sclater of Tangier Park, and Thomas Terry of Dummer.

The actual cost of the subscription is nowhere mentioned in the copy inspected in the British Library, and it would be interesting to know how much Mr Austen was prepared to spend upon this useful volume. Would William Tunnicliff have solicited subscriptions personally in the course of travelling the roads he describes, or would subscriptions have been invited by means of advertisements in local county newspapers?

Notes

1. Deirdre Le Faye, ed , *Jane Austen's Letters* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1995), Letter No. 31, of 14th-16th January 1801, p. 74.
2. David Gilson, A *Bibliography of Jane Austen* (The Soho Bibliographies, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1982; and St. Paul's Bibliographies, Winchester, 1997), Section K, 'Books

Steventon prepares for war

Robin Vick

By the end of 1797 it had become obvious that the instruments of Great Britain's internal defence – the Militia, the Supplementary Militia and the numerous recently formed volunteer corps – would be inadequate in the event of a full-scale invasion by Napoleon's army, then encamped along the French coast.[1] This led to the passing of the *Defence of the Realm Act* in April 1798, the purpose of which was to evaluate the country's resources in terms of manpower, weaponry, equipment and stores.

To comply with the Act it was 'proposed that those who reside in the Northern Parts of this County, should form A NORTH HANTS ASSOCIATION. Such Persons who wish to encourage a Plan of this Kind, are requested to meet at the Town-Hall in Basingstoke on Wednesday the ninth of May, at eleven in the forenoon.'[2] The meeting was duly held under the chairmanship of Thomas Hall Esq of Preston Candover and attended by twenty-two people, including the Revd George Austen and many of his neighbours (Bigg Wither, Portal, Holder, Harwood, Lefroy, etc.). It was resolved 'That it is expedient to form an Association (to be called the North Hants Association) for the defence of the country' and 'That a Committee be appointed to carry the above Resolution into effect.' The committee was to be drawn from the Deputy Lieutenants, Magistrates, Commissioners of the Land Tax, and 'the officiating Clergy of the respective Parishes'.[3]

A week later the Committee met to discuss details and formulate the provisions 'That it be recommended to every able Inhabitant ... to give up a portion of his time to the public service ... [and] that he will suffer himself to be trained to the use of arms ... once in every week ... That ... lists of persons so offering themselves ... be sent to the Committee ... That it be recommended to all persons having Servants or Labourers, on an actual impending invasion, to engage so many of them as may be wanted to act as Pioneers, Waggon Drivers, &c ... That it be further recommended to all persons having Waggons, Carts, or Horses, to signify how many they can allot for the public service ... and to engage to provide at the market-price, such articles as they may have in their possession, for the use of his Majesty's troops ... That it be also especially recommended to all Millers and Bakers, to compute what quantity of Flour they can provide and make into bread in a given time ... The officiating Minister is requested to explain the foregoing Resolutions to his parishioners, and to use his best endeavours to procure correct returns...'[4]

Mr Austen did not attend this meeting (Mr Holder, too, dropped out) and

seems to have played no further active role in the management of the North Hants Association. At the next meeting at the Town Hall on 23 May his place was taken by his son the Revd James Austen, and various details were discussed, mostly concerning the wording of forms and suchlike.[5] In the meantime parish clergymen had been involved in raising subscriptions to fund the Association. Some of the subscription lists (though not that of Steventon) were published in the *Reading Mercury:* Overton, for example, raised £78/2/6 and the neighbouring parish of Ashe, £30/4/0 (including ten guineas each from James Holder and the Revd George Lefroy and – somewhat improbably – five guineas from 'Mr Lefroy's Servants').

Among the surviving *Returns under the Defence the Realm Act 1798* (also known as *Posse Comitatus Lists)* for Hampshire is that of Steventon, compiled under the direction of the Revd George Austen by Daniel Smallbone in his capacity as tythingman.[6] The return did not, alas, list the names of individual parishioners nor, as sometimes happened elsewhere, their direct responses to the question 'Would you be willing to serve?' (When the exercise was repeated in 1803, for example, the compiler of a return for a parish in Exeter – perhaps recruiting in the pub – recorded the answers: 'I will give Boneypart mungle turn' and 'I will crip the wings off the French frog eaters.') But together with the Steventon Crop Return of 1801[7] it serves as an informative domesday survey of the parish in Jane Austen's time:

Schedule 1 shows that in 1798 Steventon had 39 men between the ages of 15 and 60, with a further 10 who were 'Infirm or incapable of active Service'. No parishioners were currently serving in 'Volunteer Corps of armed Associations', and there were no 'Aliens' or Quakers. 78 inhabitants were 'Persons who, from Age, Infancy, Infirmity, or other Cause, may probably be incapable of removing themselves'. (The total population of the parish in the 1801 census was 153 – 78 males, 75 females.)

Schedule 2 recorded that in Steventon there were No Oxen; 5 Cows; No 'Young Cattle and Colts'; 1,100 Sheep and Goats; 64 Pigs; 4 Riding Horses: 34 Draft Horses.

There were 12 Waggons; 5 Carts; No Corn Mills ('None' was therefore given as the 'Quantity of Corn they can grind in a Week'): 20 Ovens. The 'Amount of Bread the same could bake in Twenty-four Hours' was 60 Bushels.

The section for 'Average Amount of Dead Stock' listed 380 Quarters of Wheat; 250 of Oats; 200 of Barley; No Beans and Peas (but see 'Vetches', below); 220 Loads of Hay; 10 loads of Straw; No Sacks of Potatoes. There were no Quarters of, or Sacks of, 'Flour or other Meal' and no Quarters of Malt. The 'Blank Columns for any Articles of local Produce not herein specified' listed 50 Quarters of Vetches, a category that could include peas and beans, and '1 Thrashing Machine'.

Schedule 3 shows that of the 39 capable men between 15 and 60, 5 were willing to serve on horseback, 30 on foot. None of the 'Cavalry' could arm themselves with Swords or Pistols, none of the 'Infantry' with Firelocks or Pikes. The 'Implements they can bring' consisted of 10 Felling Axes, 6 Pick-axes, 12 Spades, 4 Shovels, 12 Bill-Hooks and 8 Saws. No men volunteered to act as 'Pioneers or Labourers',

'Servants with Cattle' or 'Guides'; but 4 were 'willing to act as Servants with Teams'.

Every one of Steventon's eligible and capable men, therefore, was willing to serve in some capacity – a remarkable display of patriotic fervour unmatched by any other parish in the area whose Returns have survived. Perhaps the result was due in no small part to the best endeavours of its 'officiating Minister'.

Notes

1. For a fuller discussion, see Linda Colley, *Britons* (London. 1992), chapter 7.
2. *Reading Mercury,* 7 May 1798.
3. Ibid., 14 May 1798.
4. Ibid., 21 May 1798.
5. Ibid., 28 May 1798.
6. Hampshire Record Office, Q22/1/2/5/10.
7. Public Record Office. HO 67/24. A facsimile is reproduced in the *Annual Report* for 1994. It shows that of Steventon's 2,155 acres, 267 were laid down to wheat; 250 to barley, 250 to oats, 1.5 to potatoes, 12 to peas, and 60 to turnips or rape. Allowing for buildings, lanes and hedgerows, the remaining 1,300 or so acres were presumably woodland and pasture.

Which Jane Austen stitched this sampler?

Deirdre Le Faye

In the Society's *Report* for 1976 [1] there is a brief note headed 'Jane Austen's Sampler', stating that this item of memorabilia was currently owned by a Mrs Molly Proctor, who was given it by Mrs I. Thompson of Rochester, whose grandfather, Mr Frederick Nicholls of Whitstable, was a grandson of a cousin of Jane Austen; a photograph of the sampler followed the note. The sampler then appeared as Lot No. 128 in Messrs Phillips' sale of Middle Eastern, Asian, Oriental & European Textiles, Costume & Lace on 19 March 1996, when it sold for £2,185. In 1997 full-size photographs of it, framed and glazed, provided by a firm called Revival, of 16 Main Road, Emsworth, Hants, were on sale at the Winchester Cathedral gift shop. An enquiry to this firm as to whether they were now the owners of the sampler, or were marketing the photographs of it on behalf of the new owner, received no response.

The sampler, now rather damaged, is nearly square (approximately 10 x 11½ inches, or 26 x 29 cm), and is worked in cross-stitch in mainly plum and green silk upon linen. It is basically in three sections: at the top an alphabet (with each letter repeated twice); followed by what looks at first sight like specific verses from the Psalms but is in fact a group of six miscellaneous and rather inaccurately quoted texts:

Praise the Lord O my Soul and all that is within me

Praise his holy Name as long as I live will I praise
The Lord I will give thanks unto God while I have
My Being sing unto the Lord O ye Kingdoms of the
Earth o sing praise unto the Lord Give the Lord the
Honour doe [sic] unto his Name worship the Lord with holy
Worship in the Time of trouble I will call upon the
Lord and he will hear me Turn thy Face from my
Sins and put out all my Misdeeds ABC [these letters are rather large and clumsy, and seem to have been added in an attempt to fill up the space of a short line] – then nine stylised flowering trees and shrubs of varying sizes; and the signature 'Jane Austen' and date at the bottom; the whole is enclosed in a border of stylised strawberry flowers and fruits.

The first doubtful point is that of the date: it was originally '1787', but part of



the lower loop of the '8' has been unpicked to make it read, at least at first sight, as '1797' – thus making the creator of the sampler appear to be ten years younger than her true age. Would the eminently honest and straightforward Austens have

bothered with such a petty deception? Secondly, the texts seem to have been chosen haphazardly and run together without any consideration for line layout or sense, as well as containing a fairly simple spelling error. Would Jane – bright as we know she was in her childhood – have copied texts inaccurately from the psalms in her Prayerbook? Thirdly, the provenance is very uncertain – Jane Austen in fact had very few first cousins (Eliza de Feuillide, Jane and Edward Cooper, James and Phylly Walter), and of these only Edward Cooper and James Walter left descendants, all of whom lived in the Midlands. There is no record of any of these cousins of the Steventon Austens living on the coast of north Kent, and the name of Frederick Nicholls cannot be found in R. A. Austen-Leigh's *Pedigree of Austen*. Unfortunately the provenance of the sampler has been passed down only by word of mouth, with no further information in writing, hence the name of Mr. Nicholls' grandparent and supposed cousin of Jane Austen, is lost forever.

It therefore seems far more likely that this sampler was in fact stitched by a Jane Austen from one of the Kentish branches of the family; *Pedigree of Austen* refers on page v to an Austen family in Ramsgate and Loose, near Maidstone, who had a common ancestor with the Steventon family in the early sixteenth century. We tend nowadays to think that the name 'Jane Austen' is unique, but in fact there were others of that name, whether by birth or by marriage, before, after, and during the lifetime of the authoress who has made it famous.

Notes

Grateful thanks are due to Dom Nicholas Seymour, OSB, of Alton Abbey, for his assistance in identifying the separate texts from the Psalms.

1. *Collected Reports 1976-85*, pp. 4-5.

Elizabeth Heathcote

Claire Tomalin

Visiting Montacute House in Somerset in 1995, my attention was caught by Daniel Gardner's strikingly original painting of a group of huntsmen. I was still more delighted when I discovered that the young man on horseback was William Heathcote, who figures in the earliest known letter by Jane Austen, as the dancing partner of her friend Elizabeth Bigg. The two other men depicted are his father, the baronet, of Hursley Park, near Winchester, and the Master of the Hounds; but it is dominated by the handsome William. He could have stood in for Mr Darcy, I thought, and when I published my life of Jane Austen I was pleased that the National Trust allowed me to reproduce Gardner's painting.

The letter in which Jane Austen first mentions Heathcote dates from January 1796. She was giving her sister Cassandra the gossip of the ball she had just

attended, and although her head was full of her partner, Tom Lefroy, she also described how her friend Elizabeth Bigg and William Heathcote opened the ball, and how it became apparent that he had cut out Elizabeth's other suitor, John Harwood, son of another local landowner. Heathcote was only a younger son – he went into the church, becoming Rector of Worting and then Prebendary of Winchester – but he was clearly a charmer, and two years later, in January 1798,



Sir William Heathcote, the Revd William Heathcote and Major Gilbert out hunting
by Daniel Gardner (1750 - 1805)
© National Trust Photographic Library/John Hammond

he and Elizabeth were married.

Elizabeth had two elder and two younger sisters, and one little brother, Harris. They had lost their mother early, and moved to Manydown Park in 1789, when their father inherited the estate. Elizabeth, Catherine and Alethea Bigg, all born in the mid-1770s, became close friends of the Austen sisters, and after Cassandra and Jane left Steventon with their parents, they enjoyed coming to stay at Manydown.

Although he looks so vigorous, Elizabeth's husband lived only four years

after their marriage, leaving her with a baby son, another William, with whom she returned to Manydown in 1802. This was also the year in which Harris proposed to Jane Austen – perhaps encouraged by his sisters – to be first accepted and then rejected. Jane and Cassandra cut short that particular visit, but the friendship with Elizabeth, Alethea and Catherine remained as firm as ever.

Catherine married in 1808 an elderly clergyman, chiefly distinguished for being Robert Southey's uncle. (I can not resist adding the marriage of an elder Bigg sister, Jane, in 1795, to a barrister, John Awdry: the creator of Thomas the Tank Engine is their direct descendant.)

Elizabeth Heathcote and Alethea Bigg remained together. Elizabeth chose not to marry again, and young William was sent in due course to school at Winchester, where he and Jane Austen's nephew James became good friends in turn. After the death of their father in 1813 Elizabeth and Alethea settled in Winchester Cathedral close, though in which house remains unclear; but here the Austen sisters came to stay with them in the days after Christmas in 1814. It was also Elizabeth who found lodgings for them in Winchester in the summer of 1817 – Mrs David's lodgings in College Street, where Jane died. So their lives were mingled from the early dancing days through sorrow and death, and the link remained in the next generation.

Elizabeth's son inherited the baronetcy in 1825, and became MP for Hampshire and later for Oxford University. He married twice and had twelve children; and his mother lived to be 82. Her portrait reproduced on the cover was painted in 1834, when she was 61. Never mind that her teeth seem to have gone, and her curls are probably false – this is a woman of spirit and sense, splendidly got up and quite formidable enough to be a worthy friend of Jane Austen.

The painter is Isaac F. Bird, who exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1826 and was still painting in 1861, I learn from Peter Funnell at the National Portrait Gallery. The portrait came to my attention when Elizabeth Heathcote's great-granddaughter, Baroness van Lynden-Heathcote, wrote to me from The Hague, enclosing a photograph. She had been unaware of the Gardner portrait of her great-grandfather at Montacute, and had seen it for the first time reproduced in my book. Now we can reintroduce husband and wife. Even though he is as young as he was when Jane Austen celebrated him in her letter of 1796, and she has outlived both husband and friend by decades, they make a fine couple.

We are very grateful to Baroness van Lynden-Heathcote for permission to reproduce the portrait.

Jane's sailor brothers and a real Dick Musgrove

Margaret Wilson

A newly discovered letter written by Jane Austen's brother Frank in 1838 shows that Jane, had she lived, would have found a real-life parallel to one of her errant fictional characters within her own extended family.

When Jane described the character of Dick Musgrove in *Persuasion* she called him a 'very troublesome, hopeless' young man, 'stupid and unmanageable on shore' whose brief career in the Navy was a failure, he being the sort of sailor 'as every captain wishes to get rid of.'[1] Dick's conduct improved when he served under Captain Wentworth, the novel's hero, and was influenced by him for the better when he was transferred to Wentworth's ship, the *Laconia,* after falling ill at Gibraltar. The Captain's kindness earned him the gratitude of the Musgrove family, who had 'very high respect for his character' as a result. This connection, which helped link Louisa Musgrove to the Captain, plays an important part in the novel's plot.

Jane's sailor brothers, Frank and Charles, who rose to the highest ranks in the service, must have come across many similar young men; one such, whose activities are recorded in family papers, was a distant relative. A letter written by Frank to his relation Sir Brook Bridges in 1838 shows how a young cousin, John Emilius Bridges, struggling to overcome the vices of drink and debt, was offered a helping hand by the Austen brothers.[2] Although somewhat different from Dick Musgrove in his situation and problems, John Bridges was similar to him in the weakness of his character. It was this weakness which the fictional Captain Wentworth and the real Captains Austen recognised and tried to alleviate.

In Dick Musgrove's case the good-hearted nature of Captain Wentworth was enough to induce him to help the 'thick-headed, unfeeling, unprofitable' midshipman. John Bridges seems to have been more of a knave than a fool, and in even greater need of family help than the fictional Dick; in his case the tie of kinship between the Austen and Bridges branches of the family was a great advantage.

Jane knew the Bridges family well, although she never met John, who was born in 1817, the year of her death. His father, Edward, was the clergyman brother of Jane's sister-in-law Elizabeth; Jane always liked him but his wife, Harriet Foote, did not command the same respect from Jane; 'she is a poor honey', wrote the novelist, 'the sort of woman determined never to be well'.[3] Her hypochondria cannot have helped the situation which faced her when her husband died in 1825, leaving John fatherless at only eight years old. The boy's entry into the Navy was a natural choice as two of his uncles were sailors, as well as his mother's first cousin once removed, Vice-Admiral Edward Foote. The latter was a great friend of Frank Austen and known to Jane, who called him 'good-humoured and pleasant'.[4] She noted his reaction to *Mansfield Park* as being surprise 'that I had the power of drawing the Portsmouth scenes so well'.[5] Although Edward Foote had died in 1833, it may well have been his long-standing friendship with Jane's brother which prompted Sir Brook (at the request of the desperate mother) to seek Frank's help

for John Bridges in 1838.

When asked to assist John, who had been discharged from a previous ship for debt and drunkenness, Frank wrote in May of that year: 'it is always more pleasing to one's feelings to be a Herald of good news than the opposite. It is therefore gratifying to me to inform you my Brother Captain Austen [Charles] has applied to the Board of Admiralty to allow your young relation John Bridges to be readmitted into the service and appointed to the *Bellerophon* under his command ... You will I am sure be aware that my Brother has been actuated by a general regard for all the young man's connections, combined with the hope of rescuing him from the degrading state in which his misconduct has involved him, and also in the expectation that he may by future regularity and good conduct prove his own sincerity in his promises of amendment, and that he will not disgrace the act of kindness now extended to him.'[6]

John duly went to sea on Charles' ship where he had the rank of mate[7] (presumably a master's mate) and at first all went well; but by November 1839, when the ship was near the Dardanelles, Charles wrote in his diary: 'Mr Bridges being reported to have been intoxicated repeatedly during the last week I told him my patience was exhausted & that he should write for his discharge.'[8] After much negotiating John was transferred to another ship, the *Phoenix,* and the Austens' efforts to influence him into becoming a worthwhile sailor came to an end. The brothers, in their attempt to help John, had shown the traits which Jane described a characteristic of sailors when Louisa Musgrove spoke enthusiastically of the Navy's 'friendliness and brotherliness'.

In 1788 Jane's father had written a Memorandum for Frank when he first went to sea, in which he gave his son wise advice: 'Your conduct, as it respects yourself, chiefly comprehends sobriety and prudence. The former you know the importance of to your health, your morals and your fortune ... Prudence ... will teach you the proper disposal of your time and the careful management of your money.'[9] These were the very qualities which John Bridges failed to possess and which Jane, too, had rated as vital to one's integrity. The lack of them was shown in her novels to be the cause of several characters' near ruin: the extravagant Wickham's debts caused much anxiety to the Bennet family, Willoughby's expensive habits were acknowledged even by himself, and Tom Bertram's serious illness was brought on partly by excessive drinking.

Jane portrayed Dick Musgrove as merely a sad case whose short life ended at sea. She would probably have been more disapproving of John Bridges, whose lack of discipline she would surely have deplored. But she would have applauded her brothers' efforts to rescue his career, particularly since it was in the profession for which she had most admiration and affection.

Notes

1. Jane Austen, *Persuasion,* ed. R.W. Chapman (3rd edn, Oxford, 1933), pp.50, 51.
2. The recipient, Sir Brook William Bridges, 4th Bart (1801-75), was head of the family at that time. He was a son of Sir Brook William, 5th Bart (1767-1829), whose sister

Elizabeth married Frank's brother, Edward Knight.

3. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford, 1995)) No. 90, 25 Sept 1813.
4. *Letters*, No. 49, 7-8 Jan, 1807.
5. Jane Austen, 'Opinions of Mansfield Park', *Minor Works* ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. B.C. Southam (Oxford, 1969), p.435.
6. Letters to Sir Brook Bridges in the Bridges family papers, Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone U373 C5/I. Quotations are reproduced by kind permission of Captn the Lord FitzWalter and Alwyn Austen.
7. Public Record Office: ADM 37/8725. Ship's Muster, *Bellerophon*.
8. Charles Austen's diary, National Maritime Museum: AUS/145, reproduced by permission of the Museum Trustees.
9. J. H. and E.C. Hubback, *Jane Austen's Sailor Brothers* (London, 1906), pp.17-19.

The shocking history of Gowland's Lotion

T.A.B. Corley

> [Sir Walter Elliot] began to compliment [Anne] on her improved looks; he thought her 'less thin in her person, in her cheeks; her skin, her complexion, greatly improved — clearer, fresher. Had she been using anything in particular?' 'No, nothing.' 'Merely Gowland,' he supposed. 'No, nothing at all.' 'Ha! he was surprised at that;' and added, 'Certainly you cannot ... be better than well; or I should recommend Gowland, the constant use of Gowland, during the spring months. Mrs. Clay has been using it at my recommendation, and you see what it has done for her. You see how it has carried away her freckles.'[1]

Born in 1706, John Gowland had been an apothecary in the household of Frederick, 'poor Fred', Prince of Wales (d. 1751). In about 1740 Elizabeth Chudleigh, future Countess of Bristol and a celebrated beauty who was the Princess's maid of honour, developed blotches on her face; Gowland cured her with a specially invented lotion. Word of this spectacular cure spread rapidly through the *haut monde* of the day, and society ladies beat a path to his door, making him a rich man. According to him, applying the lotion released a form of scurf that could be rubbed off, allowing the skin to breathe again and recover its natural bloom.[2]

In reality, the lotion contained not only bitter almonds and sugar, but also a small quantity of mercuric chloride, a derivative of sulphuric acid powerful enough to remove the top layer of skin.[3] That scourge of quack doctors and their misdeeds, John Corry, in 1810 spelt out its damaging effects:

> There's the lotion of Gowland that flays ladies' faces,
> Distorting the features of our modern graces.[4]

As Corry, and doubtless others as well, had made clear the dangers of using the

lotion some years before Jane Austen wrote *Persuasion,* it is likely that she had two reasons, not just one, for introducing 'Gowland' at this point in the novel. She wished to show how the boost in Anne's self-esteem, through being courted by two rivals, Captain Wentworth and Mr. Elliot, significantly helped to improve her looks. Moreover, if Jane knew of these dangers, then Sir Walter's remarks were further evidence of his vacuous character. We are now aware, for example, that Camden Place, Bath, where he rented his house, and described by her as 'a lofty, dignified situation such as becomes a man of consequence', was in reality in a half-finished state owing to landslips, with the house's pediment awkwardly off-centre.[5] She thus designed his enthusiastic championing of the lotion to show that he noticed what he wanted to see, such as pretty faces in the street or around him; yet not the harm being done to Mrs Clay's skin. No wonder Anne felt that the latter's freckles had not at all been lessened.

How did Jane Austen hear of Gowland's Lotion?

As an avid reader of newspapers – especially the advertisements – she could not have failed to note the war of words since about 1790 in the press over the Lotion. One of Gowland's closest friends had been Thomas Vincent (c. 1720-90), an oboist and later barber at the royal court. After Vincent was bankrupted by a failed operatic venture in London in 1774, Gowland bailed him out with some cash. Vincent took over responsibility for the Lotion after the childless Gowland's death in 1776, and put his son-in-law, Robert Dickinson, in charge of its production and sales.

Unfortunately, Vincent made a fatal mistake in 1787, by marrying Maria Elizabeth Berry, a glazier's widow many years his junior. He later branded her a 'depraved and abandoned female' who separated from him and joined with an accomplice to make her own version of the Lotion. That version clearly triumphed over Mr R. Dickinson's brand, and was the one advertised in the *Bath Chronicle* of 1814.[6]

In about 1793, Dickinson, on behalf of the deceased Vincent, revealed the controversy in 'An account of the nature and effects of Gowland's Lotion', published by Richard Cruttwell in Bath.[7] Cruttwell had lived in the city since 1768, becoming a stationer and printer of the weekly *Bath Chronicle,* as well as books and pamphlets; his son and namesake succeeded him on his death in 1799. The premises were at the south end of Stall Street, next to St. James's church and a few minutes' walk from the Abbey. They contained also a Patent Medicine Warehouse, from which Jane may have bought four boxes of lozenges for Cassandra in May 1801 while staying in the Paragon with the Leigh-Perrots.[8]

Once installed in their rented house in Sydney Place, the two Austen sisters undoubtedly visited the warehouse from time to time on the walks they took almost daily into Bath; there Gowland's Lotion would have been on view, especially in the spring to restore jaded complexions. Cruttwell set aside a ground-floor room as a coffee house, where patrons could receive red-hot news via coaches arriving from London and elsewhere at the White Hart inn further up Stall Street. Women would not have been admitted, but perhaps Mr Austen took coffee there during his more

Mrs. M. E. VINCENT's

GENUINE COWLAND'S LOTION,

For the ſafe and certain Cure of Scorbutic eruptions.

THE afflicted with Burled FACES, and obſtinate eruptions on the Skin, will find in this elegant preparation of Vegetables, a remedy poſſeſſing Unequalled Efficacy and Innocence. It is no repellant, but acts by gently opening the pores, and dulcifying and extracting the morbid humours. Many perſons of diſtinction have been happily cured by this Lotion, after medical ſkill, sea bathing and the mineral waters were tried for years to little or no purpoſe.

Ladies of the moſt delicate complexions cannot repoſe too great a reliance on this moſt ſafe and efficacious Preparation; it poſſeſſes qualities infinitely ſuperior to the moſt celebrated cofmetics, without any of their doubtful effects; clearing the ſkin of pimples, tetters, ringworms, freckles, tan, redneſs of the noſe, &c., and inducing a clear and cool healthful white and red.

This Lotion is ſold with ample directions, and many Caſes of Cure, in pint bottles at 5s. 3d. and quarts at 10s. 6d. (by ſpecial appointment of Mrs. Vincent, of No. 4, Davies-ſtreet, Grolvenor Square) by W. Bacon, at his Patent Medicine Warehouſe, No. 150, Oxford-ſtreet, oppoſite New Bond-ſtreet, and no where elſe in London.

The Stamp on each bottle is ſigned by Mrs. Vincent, and Mr. Bacon, to prevent fraud by the numerous counterfeit preparations hawking over the kingdom.

Further particulars of this Lotion may be ſeen in Bacon's Deſcriptive Pamphlet, given at his houſe.

Observer, *4 December 1791*

active years. The premises, dating from about 1707, were demolished in 1933.[9]

Jane Austen may have been familiar with Cruttwell's name for another reason. The *Memoir* by James Edward Austen-Leigh relates how in 1803 the manuscript of 'Susan' (later *Northanger Abbey*) was sold to a publisher in Bath for £10; that could have been Cruttwell, although in the end it was a London publisher, Crosby & Co., who purchased it through Henry Austen's attorney, William Seymour (c.1770-1855). As R.W. Chapman pointed out, Crosby had been associated with Cruttwell in publishing a pamphlet giving an unofficial account of the trial of Jane's aunt Mrs. Leigh-Perrot for shop-lifting in 1800; if this was an example of a 'regular trade connexion', Chapman went on, 'it is possible that the first overtures for *Susan* were in fact made in Bath'. Crosby was not an obvious choice, being smaller, less well-known and less of a specialist in novels than Thomas Cadell's publishing house, which Mr. Austen had approached over 'First Impressions' in 1797. When no publication of 'Susan' had taken place, in 1809 Jane Austen wrote

to Crosby & Co. and subsequently bought back the manuscript.[10]

There was also a collateral link in Bath with Gowland. Mrs and Miss Irvine there feature ten times in Jane Austen's letters between 1805 and 1814. Marianne Irvine, clearly friendlier with Jane than Jane was with Marianne, turns out to have been her second cousin once removed. Mrs Irvine was the sister of Emma Elizabeth, who had married Thomas Gowland junior, second cousin and residuary legatee of John Gowland's considerable estate. It is all too likely that the voluble Marianne would have boasted about her wealthy connections.[11]

How did Jane Austen learn of the Lotion's harmful properties?

No direct evidence survives as to whether Jane Austen may have heard talk in Bath, or in Alton after 1809, about the danger that the Lotion inflicted on the skin. However, in October to December 1815, while staying with Henry at Hans Place, London, she was in frequent contact with Charles Thomas Haden (1786-1824), the doctor who saw Henry through his several illnesses at that time and was hence regularly in and out of the house. Winifred Watson outlined Haden's sadly brief life in the Jane Austen Society *Report* for 1961.[12]

Haden, who also practised at the Chelsea and Brompton Dispensary, had progressive ideas about medicine, of a kind that would have appealed to Jane Austen. He believed in the benefits of fresh air and vigorous exercise, moderation in eating and drinking, regular baths, and water rather than medicines for curing skin complaints. In short, prevention was better than cure, but when people were sick, sensible diets formed a more effective remedy than medication. He was against blood-letting, although he bled Henry during the latter's illness. His plentiful writings proffer much sagacious advice on, say, rearing children and how to combat the unhealthy effects of urban life. Nowhere does he mention nostrums or their makers by name, and his only reference to mercuric chloride was for burning away infection-prone loose skin after burns.

Jane Austen always strove to make the factual background of her novels as accurate as possible, and no doubt took full advantage of this opportunity to pump Haden on medical matters. We can detect this newly-won knowledge in some of the most comic passages in her two last novels. As Haden wrote:

> There is nothing more ridiculous than to see tender, hysterical and vapourish people, perpetually complaining and yet perpetually cramming; crying out, they are ready to sink into the ground and faint away, and yet gobbling down the richest and strongest food and highest cordials, to oppress and overlay them quite.[13]

Who can forget Mary Musgrove in *Persuasion*, lying prostrate on a faded sofa and greeting the newly-arrived Anne Elliot with the complaint, 'I am so ill. I can hardly speak', but thanks to Anne's patient perseverance soon tucking into cold meat?[14] Even richer in humour is the spectacle of the self-indulgent invalid in *Sanditon*, Arthur Parker, fortifying himself with 'weak' (in fact extra-strong) cocoa and well-buttered toast. In all his manoeuvres he is observed by an astonished Charlotte Heywood, who – like Jane Austen – was very much of Haden's way of thinking

on health. *Sanditon* was thus the work, not of a mortally sick woman railing at invalidism, but of an author fully in control of her material, skilfully deploying what she had learnt about hypochondria. This sophisticated treatment of the subject fits in neatly with her reference to a nostrum that could do great harm. It is her clever interweaving of the real with invented situations which make her novels so fresh and lifelike.

I am grateful for help from David Gilson, Deirdre Le Faye, Susan McCartan, and Brian Southam. Robin Vick helped also by generously allowing me to use his unpublished paper 'Gowland's Lotion'. Margaret Bailey, Assistant Librarian at Bath Central Library, kindly provided a number of useful references.

Notes

1. *Persuasion,* ed. R.W. Chapman (3rd edn, Oxford, 1933), pp. 145-6.
2. T.A.B. Corley, 'John Gowland (1706-76)', *New Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004, forthcoming); 'On the power and effect of Gowland's lotion, prepared under the direction of Thomas Vincent...' (c. 1793).
3. *Lancet*, 7 December 1823; *Year Book of Pharmacy* (London, 1878) p. 368.
4. J. Corry, *Quack Doctors Dissected* (London, 1810), p. 45.
5. D. Selwyn, *Jane Austen and Leisure* (London, 1999), p. 41.
6. *Bath Chronicle*, 6 January 1814, in *Persuasion,* ed. Chapman, p. 272. Cruttwell (see below) was one of the four retailers in Bath listed in the advertisement as selling the Lotion.
7. T. Vincent and R. Dickinson, 'An account of the nature and effects of Gowland's lotion...' (Bath, R Cruttwell, c. 1793). A spoof bank-note of 1795, to advertise Dickinson's version of Gowland's lotion, was illustrated in the Jane Austen Society *Report* for 1979, p. 12.
8. H. Athill Cruttwell, *The History of the Cruttwell Family* (Bath, 1933), pp. 64-5; D. Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford, 1995), p. 87. These were proprietary lozenges, as patent medicine duty of 1½d. was paid.
9. *Bath Chronicle*, 22 April 1933, and headed invoices photocopied by Bath Local History Library. The White Hart inn is mentioned in *Emma,* p.186 and in *Persuasion,* p. 216.
10. J.E. Austen-Leigh, *Memoir of Jane Austen* (London, 1870), p. 138; R.W. Chapman, *Jane Austen, Facts and Problems* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 73-4; D. Gilson, *A Bibliography of Jane Austen* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 83,454, J. Fergus, *Jane Austen, A Literary Life* (Basingstoke, 1991), p. 112.
11. R. Vick, 'Cousins in Bath', *Jane Austen Society Report for 1995* (Chawton, 1996), pp. 28-9.
12. W. Watson, 'The Austens' London Doctor', *Jane Austen Society Collected Reports 1949-1965* (London, 1967), pp. 194-7.
13. Of all the works by Dr. C.T. Haden in the British Library, by far the most illuminating is *A Medical Guide for the Use of Families, or Journal of Popular Medicine* (London, 2nd ed., 1832). The passage quoted is in Volume 2, p. 34.

Mr Lock – hatter to Jane Austen's family

Dr Kenneth S. Cliff and Frank Whitbourn

Jane Austen was a very observant shopper and memorable scenes are set in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma* and elsewhere. Her letters show that she enjoyed shopping with her mother and sister Cassandra when they stayed in Bath, and in Bond Street when she visited her brother Henry in London. She had little money to spend and laid it out carefully. She looked for dress materials that would last; her watchword was 'quality first'. She recounts how she stitched her brothers' shirts, but she does not tell us where they turned for other necessary wearing apparel. Recent research has revealed where they bought their hats. Like their sister they looked for quality; only the best was good enough. They bought them where anybody who was anybody bought his hats, from James Lock, 'Hatter to the Nobility and Gentry', in London, at No. 6, St James's Street. This is shown by entries recently discovered in ledgers at that address dating from 1783.

Mr Lock's business, which is till there today, had been established long before then. In 1676 Robert Davis, hatter and hosier, moved from the City of London to St James's Street. Here new development had taken place following the restoration of Charles II to the throne and his Court at St James's Palace.

Robert Davis's business was carried on by his son Charles, who was to apprentice a young man called James Lock. In due course the apprentice married his master's daughter and inherited the business. James Lock was succeeded by his son, James Lock II and grandson James Lock III. James Lock III master-minded the business from 1821 until his retirement in 1870.

In 1835 James Benning was engaged as an apprentice and subsequently became foreman. In 1865 James Lock III took into partnership his nephew C. R. Whitbourn and James Benning. When James Lock III retired C. R. Whitbourn and James Benning became equal partners, and James Benning assumed the persona of Mr Lock. Today No. 6 St James's Street, is maintained by their respective descendants, among whom are the present writers who act as historians and archivists.

Frank Whitbourn, CRW's grandson, published *Mr Lock of St James's Street*, 'a biography with a difference' in 1971. He relates how one of Lord Nelson's last acts before embarking on HMS *Victory* for the triumph of Trafalgar, was to call at No. 6 to settle his account with Mr Lock. More recently, James Benning's descendant, Kenneth Cliff, researching the history of the hats of Royal Navy officers from 1783-1805, found references to naval officers with close associations with Nelson. Among these was an entry for Captain Francis Austen, Jane Austen's brother. Alerted by this, he subsequently found other entries for members of her family whom Mr Lock had served.

The earliest entry is dated 20 May 1783. It reads: 'Mr John Austen at Broadford Kent; 2 Livery hats, silver lace 2in Musgrave; Double Silver Loops; band and binding. Colleyer's man at the Talbot Inn Southwark.' This order was for John Austen VI, a first cousin of Jane's father. He was a regular customer of Mr Lock

and had an account No. 7.168. Other entries for orders have been found for 1784, 1786 and 1789. All were for livery hats, which were usually sent by Mr Lock to the Talbot Inn Southwark, or the Golden Cross Charing Cross for dispatch to Sevenoaks.

Though no price is given for many of the orders, the use of 2" silver lace and Musgrave style of silver loops suggests an expensive type of livery hat for this 1783 order. At this period livery hats were of different styles, ranging from the 'cocked tricorne and bicorne' to the round hat and its variations such as the Thanet. This latter was named after the Earl of Thanet who asked Mr Lock to make him a 'fashionable hat'. *Figure 1* shows the basic round hat; the Thanet had a taller crown, allowing for more decoration. Hats were at that time made from beaver fur as were some of the livery hats. The less expensive livery hats were made from felt and were often ordered with a separate 'oyle skin cover' for use in inclement weather.

An order by John Austen placed on Saturday 14 June 1783 reads: 'a Beaver hat, Double Gold Loop, band & binding, gold cord band and bullion tassels.' This was probably a bicorne hat as illustrated in *Figure 2*. The tassels would be at each side of the hat hanging over the edges between the back and front cocked parts of the hat, the gold cord band round the base. The double gold loops would be around the top edge of the hat. There is no mention of a cockade as shown in *Figure 2*, which suggests that a livery hat would be worn wide across the head rather than front to back.

The second entry for 1783, dated 28 May, reads: 'Motley Austen Esq: Court Lodge, Lambhurst, Kent; Thanet, band & binding 1-1-0. Colleyer's man to White Horse, Borough, to go by Marchant's Lambhurst Coach.' He was a first cousin of Jane's father and son of Jane's great-uncle Francis. A note in the ledger reads: 'Paid Noon 28 May 1783'. This was unusual as most customers had their own account. The purchase of a Thanet suggests he was someone that liked to keep up with the fashion.

The third entry, dated 9 August 1783, is of considerable interest, and reads: 'Rev Mr Austen, 7 Oaks Kent; a fine Thanet band & binding 7 bare, $4^1/2$. $3^3/4$. 1-1-0. Account No 8.57.' Was this Jane's father who was on a visit to see his son Edward and perhaps staying with his uncle Francis Austen at the 'Red House'? It was not unusual for people to purchase a hat and have it sent on to the place where they were staying.

However Deirdre Le Faye considers that the entry probably refers to the Revd Sackville Austen, who was the younger son of great-uncle Francis and died in 1786. This would certainly be a reasonable assumption as account numbers starting with 8 in the 1783 ledger were for new customers. The measurement $4^1/2$ refers to the height of the crown and $3^3/4$ to the width of the brim. 7 bare is the size of hat, 'bare' indicating that the customer could just take size 7.

An entry dated 9 March 1798 shows the Motley Austen family continuing to use Mr Lock as their hatter. The entry reads: 'John Austen Esq, Oriel College Oxford; Round Hat; Wood box 1-7-0.' John's father was Francis Motley Austen, whom we have already noted in 1783 as a customer. John took Holy Orders and eventually

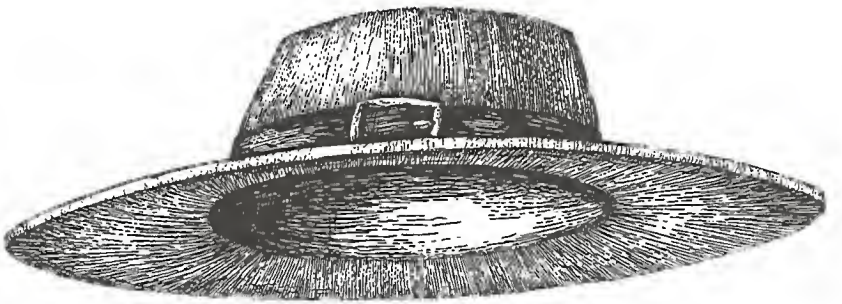


Figure 1. Round Hat

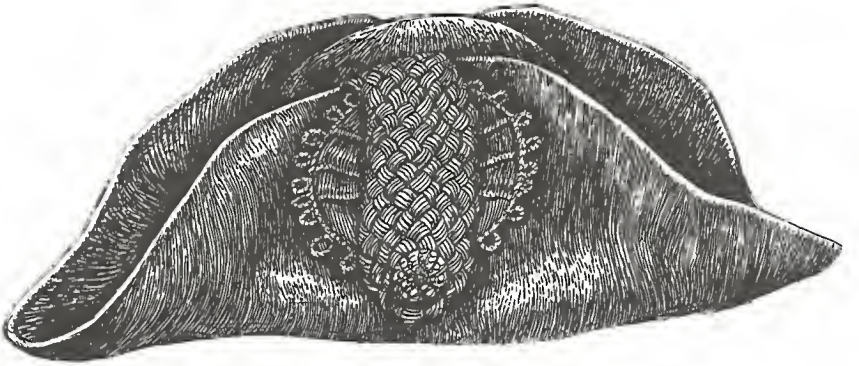


Figure 2. Bicorne Hat

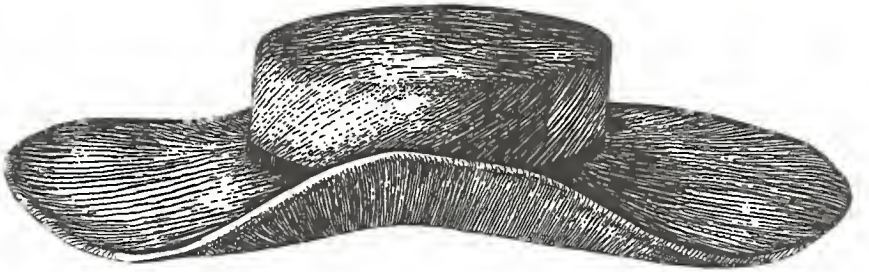


Figure 3. Clerical Flapt Hat

inherited the estate at Broadford in Kent. On 4 July 1801 John, now the Revd John Austen, purchased a 'Round Hat and Wood box' costing 1-8-0. The address was given as 'Kippington near Seven Oaks Kent'. On the death of his grandfather, John's father sold the house at Sevenoaks and moved to Kippington.

To date, three of Jane's brothers are known to have been customers: James, Edward and Francis. James placed an order on 2 July 1796: 'Rev James Austen, Deane, Hants, round hat, Wood box 1-5-0; a Pair of elastic straps 8/6'. These latter, based on their price, were probably a pair of braces. Mr Lock sold a number of items of clothing including socks and leather straps as well as hats, as a service for his customers, particularly those going overseas (both civilian and service personnel).

The round hat was a very popular type of hat of the period. The basic design is shown in *Figure 1* but there were variations in style. On 24 January 1798 the Revd James Austen placed an order for 'Bedford Hat, Size 7; Wood Box 1-7-0'. The Bedford hat had a taller crown than the basic round hat and was not dissimilar to the Thanet. It had been made for the 5th Duke of Bedford as a political protest against William Pitt's powder tax (used on wigs). Pitt was also a customer of Mr Lock.

James was to order a further Bedford hat and wood box in 1799, still costing £1-7-0. The standard type of hat for a clergyman of that period was the 'Flapt hat'. This is a variant of the round hat and is shown in *Figure 3*. James would appear to have been a man of fashion by adopting the Bedford hat in preference to the Flapt hat.

In the period 1800-05 there are entries relating to two more of Jane's brothers, Edward and Francis, as well as to James. Edward's first order on 22 October 1800 reads: 'Round Hat and patch 1-6-0; 2in Fold and lining 3-0.' The patch was to indicate that the 'hat tax' had been paid. This tax was introduced in 1783 by William Pitt as a means of raising revenue. The hat was duly lined probably with white silk, the brim folded as ordered, and dispatched by messenger boy to the Blenheim Hotel, Bond St, where Edward was staying.

Edward visited Mr Lock at 6 St James's Street on 21 April 1802. The ledger reads 'A hat dressed 4-0' and the address 'Edward Austen Esq, Godmersham Park'. Dressing involved the hat being cleaned and brushed and any bands and binding replaced. Cleaning was usually done by steam from a kettle which also caused the hat to become more flexible allowing it to be reshaped at the same time. Edward's association with Mr Lock continued through his eldest daughter Fanny, Jane's favourite niece who married a widower, Edward Knatchbull, later Sir Edward, the 9th Baronet. Edward Knatchbull's family were regular customers and there are entries for a Sir Edward Knatchbull at Grace Church Street ordering livery hats from Mr Lock in 1783 when they were sent to Hatch Green; and again in 1784, 1786 and 1789. An entry dated 28 July 1800 for 'Two Livery Round hats and duty 1-16-0' for a Mr Knatchbull in Russell Place, London, is for a cousin of Fanny Knight's future husband.

Captain Francis William Austen ordered on 18 May 1805 'Round Hat & Wood



Figure 4. Captain's Full Dress Hat

Box 6 & 7/8ths 1-11-0'. This was sent to Albany, where his brother Henry had his bank premises, though as yet no orders for Henry have been found. *Figure 4* illustrates one of the styles of a naval captain's 'full dress hat' which Francis might have worn when dining on board HMS *Victory* with Lord Nelson. In 1805 such a hat cost £6-6-0.

James continued as a customer of Mr Lock. By 1805 he was rector of Steventon; the order for 9 July reads: 'Rev James Austen, Steventon, Nr Overton Hants. Round Hat 7 & 1/8 and Wood Box 1-11-0.'

Currently we have been unable to trace any reference to Jane's brothers Henry or Charles. But for members of her immediate family to be customers of Mr Lock was a surprising find which provides information about her previously unrecorded.

We wish to acknowledge the kind help and notes provided to us by Deirdre Le Faye on our draft paper. Especially helpful have been her suggestion regarding the 1783 entry for the Revd Sackville Austen at Seven Oaks and notes on the Knatchbull family. We also wish to acknowledge the kind help of Mr Ken Hutchinson for the drawings he has made to illustrate the article.

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Placed at school

Chris Viveash

On a warm August morning in the year 1812 , James Edward Austen hurried from his parents' house, the rectory at Steventon, through the yard to the home meadow to say a final farewell to his beloved pony, Sutton. The affectionate thirteen-year-old was about to leave home to commence his formal education at a preparatory school, chosen with great care by his father, the Revd James Austen (older brother of Jane Austen). Returning to the front door, James Edward hugged his mother, Mary, and his sister, Caroline, before setting off with his father for Deane Gate in good time to catch the stagecoach to Newbury, and thence by chaise to Ramsbury, in Wiltshire.[1]

Set in the folds of the Marlborough downs, the picturesque village of Ramsbury lies on the banks of the River Kennet. Meyrick's Preparatory School was run by the Revd Edward Graves Meyrick, vicar of Ramsbury, and it had a considerable reputation.[2] Just as the rectory at Steventon had been used by the Revd George Austen as a school, so Meyrick took in pupils at his rectory (helped by his wife, Myra, and his brother Arthur). The school gave a good, basic education to many scholars who wished, in due course, to try for a university qualification. While the Revd James Austen and the Revd Edward Graves Meyrick haggled over school fees (£37 for the first term and £42 for the second),[3] James Edward and his dear friend William Heathcote, who was already a pupil at the school, ran across the adjacent churchyard and into the chancel of the old church, to stare at the curious marble figure of a recumbent Restoration gentleman holding a scroll and languidly gesturing, as if composing a poem. Racing back across the churchyard to bid farewell to his father, James Edward bravely faced a new life at Meyrick's school.

The discomfort of being a new pupil quickly wore off, thanks to William's knowledge of the school's routine. He told James Edward of the large paper kite which Mr Meyrick had made for the boys which almost lifted you away when the wind caught it; also, of the rabbits which pupils were allowed to keep, as long as they were securely housed in the large hutch which he had constructed for them.[4] The boys also shared a delightful secret: they had both been present at a Twelfth-day party when James Edward's aunt, Jane Austen, had made them scream with laughter. She had assumed the character of Mrs Candour, at a party at William's home, Manydown Park, in 1808.[5] They both declared they would always remember what a jolly good sport Aunt Jane was.

James Edward found himself enjoying schoolwork at Meyrick's, especially using globes (for which he had to pay extra) and he was also pleased with his progress in English history. The masters were not just academic dolts but had the hearts and souls of men, making the pupils their companions. The weekly Saturday night ritual whereby Mr Zillwood, the writing master, washed the boys' hair in a large pewter basin, James Edward found rather comical. When the last head had

been vigorously washed, the boys treated 'Zog', as he was familiarly known, to a large jug of Ramsbury's strong ale.[6] The fields around Ramsbury produced excellent barley, which, combined with the waters of the River Kennet, resulted in the brewing of delicious, and stimulating, beer. So good was this beverage that it found its way to London, and was much sought after.

Good wholesome food was served daily to the schoolboys, as Meyrick had purchased a nearby property, Love's Farm, which provided fresh vegetables and meat. Supper, for instance, consisted of great chunks of bread and cheese, swilled down with home-brewed beer known to the boys as 'swipes'. James Edward submitted to the scissors of Mr Moody, the village barber, with a good grace. The local apothecary, William Marsh, was called to the school twice, during the autumn term, to attend to James Edward's trifling schoolboy complaints. Torn stockings were replaced by Mr Webb, Ramsbury's linen draper; just one pair each term was all that the careful young scholar needed.[7]

The 1812 autumn school term had started while the weather was still very warm, allowing James Edward to enjoy the delight of swimming in the River Kennet, with the other boys and masters. On rare occasions the pupils could chase red deer or squirrels in the vast Savernake Forest a few miles away. The buttressed tower of Ramsbury church made a ready-made fives court and the gravestones were excellent for hide and seek. Each boy was allowed to grow produce and cultivate a small plot of land; this encouraged good husbandry. James Edward thrived under the care of Meryrick's staff and servants. The autumn term ended in mid-December when James Edward and William Heathcote shared a chaise to Newbury and a stagecoach to Deane Gate.[8] Both boys had much to relate to their respective parents on their progress at Ramsbury.

After Christmas the Revd James Austen had to pay against the itemised bill for the first term's expenses and fees, which amounted to £50 in total. Meanwhile James Edward settled down to his second term at Meyrick's. By March 1813 he was confident enough to require his own Classical Dictionary, in order to master the intricacies of the Greek language. School life continued in the same manner as the previous term until June 1813, when James Edward returned home to Steventon, his preparatory schooldays over. He had grown taller and a little fatter thanks to the benevolent care of Meyrick's School. The final bill from the school arrived at Steventon in late July and the total cost to the parents, for the second term, was again £50: the young scholar had kept his expenses to a minimum. The most expensive item on the list proved to be his copy of the Classical Dictionary.

The Revd James Austen was now keen to get James Edward's name registered for entrance to Eton College. Once again father and son set off down the lane to Deane Gate, to catch a coach for London and thence to Windsor. Unfortunately, a stiff overhanging bramble caught on the father's coat, ripping the garment so seriously that further progress was not to be considered. A later attempt to take James Edward for enrolment to Eton was abandoned when James Austen learned of the unrest and rowdiness of the Eton scholars, under their controversial headmaster, Dr Keate. John Keate flogged unmercifully. Considered a fine classical scholar (he

had won a Craven scholarship; the day would come when James Edward would benefit from a Craven scholarship), Dr Keate was unable to control 170 schoolboys in the one-room classroom known as *Upper School.* When rotten eggs were thrown at him after he had flogged twenty boys for defying him, he retaliated by flogging a further sixty pupils.[10]

James Edward was described by his aunt, Jane Austen, as having a sweet temper and warm affections. His father, agreeing with this assessment, felt it unwise to throw such a worthy boy into a school which was experiencing violent turmoil. Instead, Winchester College was chosen, where the schoolboy would benefit from the temperate tutelage of the good Dr Gabell (eventually, even Gabell would have to endure a revolt by the pupils, but after James Edward had left Winchester).

James Edward was happy with this turn of events as his beloved friend, William Heathcote, was now a pupil there. Much cramming was needed to keep James Edward up to the mark, for entrance to the College. Riding and sport were put to one side as father and son applied themselves to James Edward's continued education. A poem by the Revd James Austen, composed during the early months of 1814, cheerfully reports that many hours were employed in study and revision, to the neglect of the boy's faithful pony. Mr Chute, his hounds and the Vine Hunt were similarly disappointed by James Edward's enforced neglect of the hunting field.[11] To the family's intense joy, James Edward was eventually awarded a place at Winchester, commencing studies in the autumn of 1814.

William Heathcote and James Edward were destined to remain friends throughout their Winchester years and beyond, through the strong links of companionship forged at Meyrick's Preparatory School. The modest village school flourished until Marlborough College was founded nearby in 1843. Meyrick's School moved to Chiseldon and then to Amesbury, fading out in the 1840s. In later life pupils of Meyrick's School would fondly recall the little academy beside the leafy churchyard in sleepy Ramsbury.

Notes

1. Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen* (Hampshire, Jane Austen Society, 1986), pp. 25-26.
2. Charlotte M. Yonge, *John Keble's Parishes* (London, 1898), p. 93.
3. Wiltshire Record Office; Reference 31/1+2 , Volume 1.
4. Hampshire Record Office; 63M84/467. William Heathcote, writing from Ramsbury.
5. Yonge, p. 92.
6. Barbara Croucher, *The Village in the Valley* (Ramsbury: privately printed, 1986), p. 190.
7. WRO 31/1+2 Vol. 1.
8. HRO 63M84/468. William Heathcote writing from Ramsbury.
9. Mary Augusta Austen Leigh, *James Edward Austen Leigh* (London: privately printed, 1911), pp. 2-3.
10. Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, A *History of Eton College* (London, 1899), pp. 383-385.

Miss Thackeray

Chris Viveash

Anne Isabella Thackeray, Lady Ritchie (1837-1919), was the eldest daughter of William Makepeace Thackeray. From her earliest years she was a keen observer of the leading literary figures of the day, many of whom were friends of her father. William Makepeace Thackeray shared his love of Jane Austen with his family. Writing from France in 1859, he confessed, 'I have been living in Bath for the last ten days in Miss Austen's novels which have helped me to carry through a deal of dreary time'.[1]

Following her father's practice, Anne Isabella wrote novels such as *Old Kensington* and *The Village on the Cliff,* but her real talent was for biographical sketches. Her volume of short biographies of literary women writers, *A Book of Sibyls,* published in 1883, has a preface describing a dinner party which she had attended in 1882, where a friend made some reference to 'Maple Grove and Selina', asking in which county Maple Grove was situated. Everyone immediately had a theory. The hostess remarked, 'What a curious sign it is of Jane Austen's increasing popularity!'[2]



Anne Thackeray Ritchie, 1914
from a drawing by John Sargent, R.A.

Anne Isabella's essay on Jane Austen in *A Book of Sibyls* is famous for the following statement: 'Dear books! bright, sparkling with wit and animation, in which the homely heroines charm, the dull hours fly, and the very bores are enchanting.' This type of entertaining criticism is now referred to as the *dear Jane* school of appreciation and is held in contempt by today's literary critics. Unabashed and unrepentant, Anne Isabella also wrote: 'All these people nearly start out of the pages, so natural and unaffected are they, and yet they never lived except in the imagination of one lady with bright eyes, who sat down to an old mahogany desk in a quiet country parlour, and evoked them for us'.

Anne Isabella was a unique and popular woman. She received a proposal of marriage from Richmond Ritchie whilst he was still an Eton schooboy. She waited for him and married him when she was aged forty, and he had attained the age of twenty-three. The marriage was a great success, broken only by his early death, in 1912, through overwork.

A witty exchange of badinage, concerning Jane Austen, took place between Anne Isabella and a leading literary figure in 1898. Writing an account of this to her son (who was abroad, in France) she wrote, 'Our dinner was a very great success, and Henry James not only ornamental but useful and really and truly kind ... I asked him if he had read Sarah Grand's books,[3] he said, 'It may be Pride, it may be Prejudice, but I have not,' so I said, 'Perhaps it may be Sense or Sensibility,' and Henry burst out laughing and said: 'I only need Persuasion!'[4]

Notes

1. Hester Ritchie, *Letters of Anne Thackeray Ritchie* (London, 1924), p. 114.
2. Miss Thackeray, *A Book of Sibyls* (London, 1883), p. v.
3. Michael Sadleir, *XIX Century Fiction* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 152-53. Sarah Grand (Mrs Frances McFall, 1862-1943) wrote T*he Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *Ideala* (1889).
4. Ritchie, pp. 247-48.

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Notes on Sales

Christine Penney

Manuscripts

Item 320 in the Sotheby (New York) sale on 22 June was the autograph letter from Jane Austen to Cassandra dated 27 October [1798]. This is no 10 in Deirdre Le Faye's edition of the letters and includes the famous comment on Mrs Hall's giving birth to a dead child 'oweing to a fright – I suppose she happened unawares to look at her husband'. This letter came from the estate of Mrs Raymond E. Hartz of New Jersey. Estimated at $15,000-$20,000 it sold for $21,000. It later appeared in Quaritch's catalogue 1268 as the first item, priced now at £32,000, a very considerable mark-up.

First and early editions

Sense and Sensibility

Item 3 in Simon Finch's Catalogue 37 (as usual, a sumptuous publication) was a copy of the first edition, 1811 (Gilson A1) at the very fancy price of £16,000. All three half-titles were present and it was bound by Riviere and Son in brown half morocco, the spines lettered in gilt with marbled endpapers and the bookplates of Dorothy Stewart and Pamela Kingzett. Another copy was Item 5 in James Burmester's Catalogue 40, also for £16,000. This was described as a fine copy in a simple but attractive contemporary binding of black half morocco, lacking the half-titles. Lot 162 in the Phillips sale on 12 February was a copy of vol. 1 only of the first edition, with half-title and bound in later roan-backed boards. Estimated at £200-£400 this sold for £420.

Item 8 in Maggs Catalogue 1274 was a rare example of a copy of the second edition, 1813 (Gilson A2) in the original blue boards with grey paper spines unusually, lacking the normal pink paper printed spine labels, but with the volume numbers written in ink, uncut and complete with half-titles. A former owner's inscription had been excised from the front free endpaper of each volume and there was a little wear to the extremities of the binding. The description quoted David Gilson's comment on the extreme rarity of copies in genuinely unsophisticated state (he had found none for auction since 1930) and this no doubt inspired the high price of £15,000. Another copy was Lot 103 at Sotheby's on 15 July. This lacked all half-titles and final blanks, was heavily spotted and foxed and bound in 19th century limp red morocco. Estimated at £600-£800 it failed to sell. Lot 225 at Sotheby's on 15 December offered another copy, lacking half-titles, in contemporary brown calf rebacked, with the original spine of vol. 2 loosely inserted. Estimated at £800-£1,200 this realised £1,900.

Pride and Prejudice

Described as a good, large copy (and so it should have been at the price of £18,500) the first edition, 1813 (Gilson A3) was Item 4 in Simon Finch's Catalogue 37. It was bound in contemporary tan calf, rebacked, retaining the original upper portion of the spine of vol. 1 and with all half-titles. Another copy was Lot 321 in the Sotheby (New York) sale on 22 June. In contemporary half calf this lacked the half-titles and had the title pages to vols 2 and 3 misbound, presumably at the time of binding as the error was continued on the spines. A former owner was Christina Anderson of St Germains. Estimated at $7,000 - $10,000 it sold for $17,000. Lot 161 in the Phillips sale on 12 February was a made-up copy with the majority of the leaves from the first edition. Advertised as not subject to return, it sounded a thorough mess, with many leaves loose, some supplied in facsimile, some from other copies and at least one leaf missing. It was estimated at £500-£1,000 but went for £500. A better copy was Lot 224 at Sotheby's on 15 December, bound in contemporary brown calf, rebacked with one original spine and lacking half-titles. Estimated at £,3,000-£4,000 this went for £11,000. Lot 536 at Sotheby's on 17 November was the second edition, 1813 (Gilson A4) in early 19th-century brown cloth, half-titles present but with the leaf D4 (pages 55-56) of vol. 3 reversed in binding. The estimate was £500-£700 and the hammer price £1,300. Item 16 in Ian Hodgkins's Catalogue 106 was a copy of the third edition, 1817 (Gilson A5), with half-titles and in contemporary full leather, priced at £1,400. Item 31 in Nigel Williams's Catalogue 70 was another copy in contemporary tan calf, rebacked with the ownership signatures of Margaret Shelley, 1838. The price was £2,500.

Mansfield Park

The first edition, 1814 (Gilson A6) was Item 5 in Simon Finch's Catalogue 37, priced at £5,500. This lacked the half-titles and was bound in 'sympathetic' green half calf by Bayntun-Riviere. The second edition, 1816 (Gilson A7) was Item 158 in James Burmester's Catalogue 43. This had the half-titles and final imprint leaf

to vol. 3 and was bound in contemporary black half calf. The price was £1,500.

Emma

Item 26 in Nigel Williams's Catalogue 68 was a copy of the first edition, 1816 (Gilson A8). Described as a 'beautiful copy' (and certainly at a beautiful price – £8,500) this was rebound in full antiqued tree calf by Aquarius but lacked the half-titles to vols 2 and 3. This copy reappeared in the same dealer's Catalogue 10 (Item 30) at the same price. Simon Finch had a copy for £7,000 in his Catalogue 37 (Item 6). This lacked the half-titles and the title page to vol. 3 had been washed to remove an ownership inscription. It was recased in contemporary purple morocco.

Northanger Abbey and Persuasion

A copy of the first edition, 1818 (Gilson A9), priced at £4,800, was Item 7 in Simon Finch's Catalogue 37. The half-titles were supplied in skilful facsimile although the original ones to vol. 1 were in fact present. The set was bound by Riviere in polished tan calf and had the bookplates of Frederick S. Peck. Another copy was Item 7 in Blackwell's Catalogue of recent purchases (January 1999), originally belonging to Anthony Ashley Cooper, later Earl of Shaftesbury. Priced at £4,800 also and bound in contemporary half russet roan it lacked half-titles to all except the first volume and the final blanks to vols 1 and 2. The margins of sig. H4 in vol. 2 had two faint pencil sketches of a church and a profiled head. This copy reappeared as Item 22 in Blackwell's Catalogue B126 at the same price. Item 139 in James Burmester's Catalogue 42 (and reappearing as Item 159 in his next catalogue) was described as 'a very appealing copy' of the first edition, priced at £5,000. Lacking half-titles to all except vol. 1 and the final two blanks in vol. 4, this was rebound in contemporary style half red morocco and bore the ownership inscriptions of Maria Nugent, October 1824. She was the wife of Sir George Nugent, whose bookplate was in vol. 1. One must wonder where she acquired this copy since she was born in America and lived abroad for much of her life. The diaries of her four-year stay in Jamaica were published in 1966. Another copy was Item 7 in Maggs's Catalogue 1274, in contemporary calf, lacking the half-title to vol. 1 and the final blanks to vol. 4. It had the bookplates of Mary Anne Robb and Alfred H. J. Cochrane. The price was £5,500. Lot 223 at Sotheby's on 15 December was another copy, lacking half-titles, in contemporary brown calf, estimated at £3,000 - £4,000 and realising £3,400.

Other material

A rare opportunity to acquire a volume from Jane Austen's own collection was offered by Nigel Williams in his Catalogue 67. Item 9 was Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature,* 1791, with her signature on the title page. This is Gilson K8 and one of only 20 works belonging to Jane Austen known to survive, 10 of which are in private hands. This one was previously offered in Elkin Mathews's Catalogue 100 in 1945 and later became the property of Mrs Raymond E Hartz. Included with it was a letter from R. A. Austen-Leigh dated 27 March 1945,

authenticating the signature. The price was £22,500. Another item mentioned in K8 was William Turner's *The History of all Religions in the World*, London, 1695, which came from the library of Harris Bigg-Wither of Manydown Park – Jane Austen's fiançé for all of 12 hours in December 1802. This book also belonged to the late Mrs Hartz and was Item 2 in Quaritch's Catalogue 1268, priced at £3,000. Lot 152 in the Bloomsbury Book Auction sale on 30 September comprised a set of James Austen's periodical *The Loiterer,* 2 vols, 1789-1790. Estimated at £300-£400 this sold for £920. Eighteen of the Charles Edmund Brock drawings for *Persuasion* (see my 1998 report) were offered again at Sotheby's on 13 May as Lots 232-249. This time each drawing was catalogued in some detail as a separate Lot and uniformly estimated at £500-£700. Only four sold – Lots 241, 247, 248 and 249, each fetching £450. Lot 241 was entitled 'The horror of that moment to all who stood around!', Lot 247 was 'We had a famous set-to at rat-hunting', Lot 248 'I shall have no scruple in asking you to take my place and give Anne your arm' and Lot 249 was 'Placed it before Anne'. Lot 247 subsequently appeared as Item 14 in Ian Hodgkins's Catalogue 106, priced at £825.

The case against Charlotte Lucas

K. St J. Damstra

Pride and Prejudice[1] is a standard text in the canon of English literature, studied by countless students. It therefore seems incredible that, two centuries after it was written, it should reveal a subplot that changes the way events in the book are perceived. I hope to convince you that this is not just an eccentric view, but that Jane Austen deliberately laid the trail herself. It is critical that this subplot is concealed from the protagonists, but in hiding it from them Jane Austen may have buried it a little deep for most of her readers. Commenting on minor editorial omissions, she said that *Pride and Prejudice* was not written 'for such dull Elves As have not a great deal of Ingenuity themselves'.[2] Perhaps she overestimated the ingenuity of her readers. Or it may be that her public, practised at riddles, charades, acrostics and verse letters, were more sensitive to such twists. This subplot may thus have been lost only in the twentieth century.

I suggest that Charlotte Lucas plays a greater role than is at first obvious. It is Charlotte's active interference that results in Elizabeth and Darcy getting together. She does this for one overriding and selfish reason – an earnest desire for greater financial security. As a parson's wife, she plans to get her hands on more money by marrying her best friend to one of England's richest landowners, a landowner who also happens to provide significant patronage to the church. Within this patronage is the 'valuable family living' at Kympton with its 'excellent Parsonage House' that Wickham once expected to be his (vol. II, ch. 12; vol. III, ch. 10). But it is only

possible for Mr Collins to receive a better living if neither Elizabeth nor Darcy is aware of this interference. Having clearly outlined Charlotte's intentions in chapter 9 of volume II, Jane Austen changes tack and transfers the reader into the minds of the central couple, so that in volume III the main focalizers are Elizabeth and Darcy. As the events unravel Charlotte's interference must be hidden from these protagonists and the only method Jane Austen uses to attract the reader's attention to the real state of affairs is the narrator's irony. Although some of this irony has previously been noted, its meaning has been misinterpreted. Critics have also failed to see the irony in Darcy's dogmatism. Instead Darcy's categorical statements have led some to criticise Jane Austen for placing the ultimate authority in the mouth of a man: a situation that feminists find uncomfortable. But the joke is on Darcy, whose prejudice prevents him from seeing Charlotte's scheme. The name of the game is *Pride and Prejudice* and Jane Austen's jest is re-enacted upon each reader who prejudges her characters and falls into the same trap.

Jane Austen creates Charlotte Lucas as a determined schemer who does not trust in the vagaries of fate. Charlotte's manipulative skills rely on her perceptive insight and cunning deception. Her scheming is described as taking two directions. The first one is referred to as 'Miss Lucas's scheme'. When Mrs Bennet and Mr Collins discuss his proposal to Elizabeth 'Charlotte, detained [...] by a little curiosity, satisfied herself with walking to the window and pretending not to hear' (vol. I, ch. 10). Soon we learn that 'Charlotte's kindness extended farther than Elizabeth had any conception of' – its object was nothing less than to secure her from any return of Mr Collins's addresses, by engaging them towards herself. Such was 'Miss Lucas's scheme' (vol. II, ch. 22). Charlotte's plot is eventually realised when 'Miss Lucas perceived [Mr. Collins] from an upper window as he walked towards the house, and instantly set out to meet him accidentally in the lane' (vol. II, ch. 22). 'Without thinking highly either of men or of matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want' (vol. I, ch. 22). She has, in Elizabeth Bennet, an 'intimate friend' (vol. I, ch. 5) who also needs to be provided for honourably. In order to set out the plot, Jane Austen makes Charlotte the focalizer in chapter 9 of volume II, so that the reader has a rare insight into her thoughts:

> In her kind schemes for Elizabeth, she sometimes planned her marrying Colonel Fitzwilliam. He was beyond comparison the pleasantest man; he certainly admired her, and his situation in life was most eligible, but, to counterbalance these advantages, Mr. Darcy had considerable patronage in the church, and his cousin [Colonel Fitzwilliam] could have none at all. (vol. II, ch. 9)

Charlotte's goal is thus to get more money for herself. If this happens to tie in with her belief in marriage as 'the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune', all the better. Jane Austen anticipates Charlotte's second scheme when Elizabeth realizes that 'when called into action, [Charlotte] would have sacrificed every better feeling to worldly advantage' (vol. I, ch. 22). Elizabeth later confirms this when she at first cannot understand Charlotte's 'sacrifice of so

many hours' visiting Rosings. All becomes clear when 'Elizabeth recollected that there might be other family livings to be disposed of' (vol. II, ch. 7). Ironically Mrs Bennet is the one who comments on the 'artful' Lucases who 'are all for what they can get' (vol. II, ch. 2).

Besides having a very strong motive, Charlotte's ability to interpret situations correctly is emphasised in her comments on Jane's guarded behaviour towards Bingley. 'If a woman conceals her affection with the same skill from the object of it, she may lose the opportunity of fixing him; and it will then be but poor consolation to believe the world equally in the dark' (vol. I, ch. 6). Darcy later confirms that 'the serenity of [Jane's] countenance and air was such, as might have given the most acute observer, a conviction that, however amiable her temper, her heart was not likely to be easily touched' (vol. II, ch. 12). In this case Darcy and Charlotte are equally acute observers. Charlotte is shown to focus her observation on Elizabeth and Darcy. She first voices her suspicions to Elizabeth when Darcy calls at the parsonage the morning after his arrival at Rosings. 'I may thank you, Eliza, for this piece of civility. Mr Darcy would never have come so soon to wait upon me' (vol. II, ch. 7). These are confirmed a week later when she confides: 'My dear Eliza he must be in love with you, or he would never have called on us in this familiar way' (vol. II, ch. 9). Elizabeth always refutes the idea, so Charlotte's scheming needs more accurate observation. As a result, we are told, 'she sat herself seriously to work to find it out' (vol. II, ch. 9). Once she has decided on Darcy's feelings it is not within Charlotte's nature to allow such relationships to take their course. It is specifically stated that she strongly believes 'there is so much of gratitude or vanity in almost every attachment, that it is not safe to leave any to itself' (vol. I, ch. 6). 'Almost every attachment' most definitely includes that between Elizabeth and Darcy. If Elizabeth does not act then she will have to.

With all of this detailed groundwork complete, no more is said of this scheme except that by the end of the book Charlotte is moving steadily towards her goal. Elizabeth and Darcy are together and Charlotte is 'really rejoicing in the match' (vol. III, ch. 18). Mr Bennet helps by advising Mr Collins to 'stand by the nephew. He has more to give' (vol. III, ch. 18). The future seems assured when Darcy bears Mr Collins's 'parading and obsequious civility [...] with admirable calmness' (vol. III, ch. 18). For most readers the insight into Charlotte's thoughts in volume II is only a distant memory. Elizabeth and Darcy are the chief focalizers in volume III and it is with them that the reader is most closely bonded. Which, as already stated, is precisely the point. Any manipulation on Charlotte's part must be kept secret from them both. Her scheme depends on Elizabeth spontaneously encouraging Darcy in such a way that Mr Collins receives more of Darcy's generosity. If either Elizabeth or Darcy ever suspects that Charlotte has manipulated them, this source of income will be seriously jeopardised and Charlotte's scheme will have failed.

Jane Austen alerts her readers to Elizabeth and Darcy's blinkered outlook by ending the novel with a sentence that is only partly true. This states that it was the Gardiners [...] who, by bringing her into Derbyshire, had been the means of uniting them. Although unaware of Charlotte's scheme, Rachel M. Brownstein

draws attention to the anomaly in this last sentence:

> Contemplating the happy couple at Pemberley in the end, the reader doesn't have to be told that everyone [...] has been, like Elizabeth's aunt and uncle, the Gardiners, 'the means of uniting them'. (There is surely a note of justifiable authorial complacency in the triumphant two words that end the book.)[3]

Knowing Jane Austen's extensive use of irony, this blatant 'authorial complacency' signals a hidden agenda and should send the reader back to the body of the text.

In the whole sequence of events that leads up to the marriage of Elizabeth and Darcy, Charlotte controls one vital link: the contents of a letter from her family, 'some of the good-natured, gossiping Lucases' (vol. III, ch. 15). I suggest that although this letter did contain news of Jane's engagement to Bingley, the reader is intended to realise that it never contained any other news. Instead Charlotte deliberately misleads Mr Collins into believing that the letter states Darcy's intention to marry Elizabeth. Charlotte, whose ulterior motives have already been stated, is in the best position to invent this 'news' and the misinformation immediately sets off a predictable chain reaction. Mr Collins rushes off to Lady Catherine who heads out on her desperate mission to Elizabeth at Longbourn.

Jane Austen clearly illustrates the predictable behaviour patterns of both Lady Catherine and Mr Collins. She describes Mr Collins rushing off to Lady Catherine with the news of Lydia (vol III, ch. 6). Charlotte could thus predict a repeat performance. In any case the level of control Charlotte has over Mr Collins is carefully detailed in the living arrangements at the parsonage (vol. II, ch. 7), in encouraging his gardening (vol. II, ch. 5), and in ensuring that at Rosings 'the office of introduction should be her's' (vol. II, ch. 6). A Charlotte with these skills can easily manipulate Mr Collins into believing that news of Elizabeth and Darcy's forthcoming marriage has just arrived from Hertfordshire. But could Charlotte predict Lady Catherine's response on receiving such a report? After rejecting Darcy's first proposal, Elizabeth imagined 'what her ladyship's indignation would have been' and amused herself with asking 'how would she have behaved?' (vol. II, ch. 14). Lady Catherine would undoubtedly try to prevent such a marriage. She is unlikely to intimidate Darcy, but the narrative shows that she is quite capable of trying to intimidate Elizabeth. In addition we are told that there are 'not many [days] in which [Mr Collins's] wife did not think it necessary to go [to Rosings] likewise' (vol. II, ch. 7). This daily contact puts Charlotte in a strong position to predict Lady Catherine's reaction and if necessary, subtly manipulate her course of action.

These events become important after their engagement when Elizabeth expresses her distress and in response Darcy develops his controversial moral:

> But I wonder how long you *would* have gone on, if you had been left to yourself. I wonder when you *would* have spoken, if I had not asked you! My resolution of thanking you for your kindness to Lydia had certainly great effect. *Too much,* I am afraid; for what becomes of the moral, if our comfort springs from a breach of promise, for I ought not to have mentioned the subject? This

will never do.'

> 'You need not distress yourself. The moral will be perfectly fair. Lady Catherine's unjustifiable endeavours to separate us, were the means of removing all my doubts. I am not indebted for my personal happiness to your eager desire of expressing your gratitude. I was not in a humour to wait for any opening of your's. My aunt's intelligence had given me hope, and I was determined at once to know everything.' (Vol. III, Ch. 18)

Darcy tells Elizabeth that her lack of knowledge has led to her prejudging the situation and thus concluding with a false moral. But, in a similar way, Darcy's imperfect knowledge results in his pointing the finger at Lady Catherine who, like Mr Collins, is only a pawn in Charlotte's greater scheme. Darcy prejudges the events, just as Elizabeth does. The fuller picture only emerges for the reader who has been given access to the manipulative scheme in Charlotte's mind.

As one would expect, Elizabeth supports the conventional view that the gossip originated with the Lucas family in Hertfordshire. Before her father receives Mr Collins's letter, Lady Catherine tells Elizabeth that she had received 'a report of a most alarming nature' that included news both of Jane's and Elizabeth's intended marriages. After Lady Catherine leaves, Elizabeth is left to think:

> 'but from what the report of their engagement could originate, Elizabeth was at a loss to imagine; till she recollected that *his* being the intimate friend of Bingley, and *her* being the sister of Jane, was enough, at a time when the expectation of one wedding, made every body eager for another, to supply the idea. She had not herself forgotten to feel that the marriage of her sister must bring them more frequently together. And her neighbours at Lucas Lodge, therefore (for through their communication with the Collinses, the report she concluded had reached Lady Catherine) had only set *that* down as almost certain and immediate, which *she* had looked forward to as possible, at some future time. (Vol. III, ch. 15)

Knowing how often Elizabeth's conclusions are proved false, there is no need for the reader to believe her explanation, particularly as Charlotte's scheme relies on her never finding out the truth. It is significant that the narrator never supports the idea that the gossip originated from Lucas Lodge; it is clearly stated that this is only what Elizabeth, Mr Collins and Mr Bennet think to be true.

In the novel Jane Austen carefully shows how gossip may originate out of an innocent comment. The rumour that 'Mr Bingley was to bring twelve ladies and seven gentlemen with him to the assembly', is shown to have had a basis (vol. I, ch. 3). It is not done deceptively or with malicious intent. Instead Lady Lucas is so concerned by Mrs Bennet's being 'quite disconcerted' that she 'quieted her fears a little by starting the idea of his being gone to London only to get a large party for the ball'. Jane Austen is also careful to show how the gossip concerning Jane and Bingley spread: 'Mrs. Bennet was privileged to whisper it to Mrs. Philips, and *she* ventured, without any permission, to do the same by all her neighbours in Meryton' (vol. III, ch. 13). So besides Elizabeth's loose explanation, is there any comparable basis for the critical gossip that Charlotte passes on to Mr Collins

concerning Elizabeth and Darcy? If Jane Austen intended it to have originated from Charlotte's family she may have included some other way of them guessing that Darcy was interested in Elizabeth. Following up this thread is not critically important to this discussion because Charlotte's interference is the only way that allows the reader to understand her scheme outlined in volume II, chapter 9. Nevertheless the examination presented below shows that the plot of the novel is so intricately detailed that it tolerates close analysis of each brush stroke. We have to begin by examining who knew anything of their relationship.

While at Lambton the Gardiners 'felt that there was no other way of accounting for such attentions [...] than by supposing a partiality for their niece' (vol. III, ch. 2). But Mrs Gardiner leaves Longbourn still perplexed when the 'half-expectation' of a letter from Darcy is not realized (vol. III, ch. 6). The 'very particular regard' she has for Elizabeth and Jane surely prevents her and the 'sensible, gentlemanlike' Mr Gardiner from leaking their privileged information to the Lucases while in Hertfordshire (vol. II, ch. 2). The arrival of Darcy at Gracechurch Street confirms all their suspicions so that Mrs Gardiner particularly asks Elizabeth, as future mistress of Pemberley, not to exclude her from the park (vol. III, ch. 10). But still there is no reason to suppose that the Gardiners communicate their certainty to the Lucases. Yet at this time there is a link between these two families: Lydia.

Lydia stays with the Gardiners before her marriage and on arrival at Longbourn 'longed to see [...] the Lucases' (vol. III, ch. 9). Is it possible that Lydia's insistence on telling Elizabeth about her wedding is a deliberate ploy to drop Darcy's name because she knows of his feelings for Elizabeth (vol. III, ch. 9)? This is unlikely; Lydia, who is 'always unguarded', shows little ability to use information slyly (vol. I, ch. 23). Not only is she unable to keep Mr Darcy's presence at her wedding a secret, she freely admits that if asked 'she should certainly tell [...] all' (vol. III, ch. 9). The Gardiners know Lydia well enough not to tell her of their suspicions. In addition Lydia is so wrapped up in her own excitement she admits to not hearing 'above one word in ten' that her aunt tells her (vol. III, ch. 9), and 'she seldom listened to any body for more than half a minute' (vol. II, ch. 16). Darcy only sees and talks with Lydia once, when he finds out that she is set on staying with Wickham. He continues all further arrangements exclusively with Wickham, who is presumably left to tell Lydia (vol. III, ch. 10). There is no reason to suppose that Wickham explains Darcy's behaviour as resulting from an interest in Elizabeth, when it is already 'openly acknowledged' in Hertfordshire that Wickham has a legitimate claim on Darcy (vol. II, ch. 1). No, Lydia can be ruled out.

What about the Lucases themselves? The second daughter, Maria, accompanies Elizabeth to Hunsford and witnesses the same events as Charlotte. Maria is present, for example, when Charlotte exclaims 'My dear Eliza he must be in love with you' (vol. II, ch. 9). At the end of the visit Maria exclaims to Elizabeth 'How much I shall have to tell!' (vol. II, ch. 15) and when she meets her family 'various were the subjects which occupied them' (vol. II, ch. 16). But Maria lacks Charlotte's insight. Elizabeth considers her 'a good humoured girl, but as empty-headed as [her father]' (vol. 11, ch. 4). The novel teaches us never to trust Elizabeth's prejudgement of

anyone, but in this case the narrator supports her judgement in a number of ways. We are shown her breathless agitation at 'such a sight to be seen', that turns out to be only Miss De Bourgh's coach (vol. II, ch. 5). On the first visit to Rosings we are told Maria had been 'little used to company', feels 'alarm' and is 'frightened almost out of her senses [...], not knowing which way to look' (vol. II, ch. 6). The only time the narrator enters her mind Maria 'thought speaking out of the question' (vol. II, ch. 6). She is thus an unlikely character to show real insight. But rumour does not need insight; we must focus in on the critical period during which the rumour is supposed to have been initiated.

The time period concerned lies between the two letters to Mrs Collins. The one tells her about Lydia (vol. III, ch. 6) and the next concerns Jane's engagement (vol. III, ch. 15). During this period Elizabeth meets Darcy twice in Hertfordshire. The first time Bingley and Darcy arrive at Longbourn unexpectedly and only Bennets are present. The second is a dinner party at Longbourn in Bingley's honour to which Mrs Bennet does not invite the Lucases. So they cannot have seen anything themselves, but gossip does not rely on personal sight. Present at the dinner party is none other than Mrs Long, first introduced on page 1 as the local gossip (vol. III, ch. 11). Anything Mrs Long notices could well be expanded and repeated to the Lucases. When all other characters fail to pass on information there are always the servants. Mrs Bennet, for example, solicits them for information from Netherfield (vol. III, ch. 11).

But the most significant point of both meetings is that there is nothing to indicate that Darcy is interested in Elizabeth. The person most eager for a sign is Elizabeth herself, who is unable to detect anything at all. She ends up disappointed by the first meeting (vol. III, ch. 11). At the second there is, as she had feared, no more than the 'mere ceremonious salutation attending his entrance' (vol. III, ch. 12). In fact an attentive gossip searching for any indication of imminent nuptials would have to conclude that they had been mistaken. All this leaves Charlotte as the strongest suspect.

There are two equally exciting explanations for why this subplot is not more clearly stated. On the one hand Jane Austen may have hidden it deeper than she had originally intended; on the other we must not underestimate her delight in subtlety. She compared her writing to a 'little bit of ivory, two inches wide, on which I work with so fine a brush, as produces little effect after much labour'.[4] This carefully controlled text is clearly seen in *Pride and Prejudice,* which had the longest gestation period of all her novels. A complete text, under the title 'First Impressions' was initially submitted for publication in 1797 and rejected unread.[5] The novel was laid aside, reworked and eventually sold for publication in 1812. During the final revision Jane Austen claimed she 'lop't and crop't so successfully' that the second volume ended up being 'shorter than I could wish, but the difference is not so much in reality as in look, there being a larger proportion of narrative in that part'.[6] Kingsley Amis bemoans the enthusiasm that Kipling had for generous cutting.[7] He feels that sometimes Kipling was so familiar with the full story that he edited out necessary information, which then obscured the plot for the reader. Jane

Austen may have fallen into a similar trap, so that what may have been intended to be a thinly veiled plot ended up lost to all but the most attentive reader. It is significant that the foundation for the plot connected with Charlotte Lucas is laid in Chapter 9 of this 'shorter-than-I-could-wish' volume II. Unfortunately no previous drafts of the manuscript exist.

The alternative explanation suggests that the subdued nature of the plot is deliberate. Charlotte's is not the only partially hidden influence in the oeuvre. Lisa Hopkins explores the significance of food and poison in *Emma* and demonstrates how social attitudes and financial status are clarified and demarcated by food. Paula Byrne shows how in *Mansfield Park* subtle references to various theatrical roles expose the nature of the characters who propose playing them. Hidden sub-plots and semi-visible influences are quite a speciality of Jane Austen. If this subtlety is deliberate then what great satisfaction she would have felt to know that for two centuries prejudice would blind her readers to seeing the characters that she displayed!

But what difference does this new insight make to our appreciation of the novel? A great deal, as it turns out. If Charlotte's plan is not understood, Jane Austen presents a problem for a few feminist critics. Although some sincerely wish to canonise this outstanding novelist as a 'feminist moralist of the same school [as Mary Wollstonecroft]',[8] they are aware that she strays irreverently from orthodox dogma. *Pride and Prejudice* is her only novel in which a moral is expressly stated and here she resorts to using the authoritarian weight of a man, Darcy, to formulate this moral. This 'perfectly fair' moral states that the endeavours of a matriarch to defend her family's fortune from what she sees as 'the upstart pretensions of a young woman without family, connections or fortune' are unjustifiable and deserve to fail (vol. III, ch. 14). Judith Lowder Newton bewails the fact that 'Elizabeth never does challenge Darcy's ideologically justified right to criticise women or to act the connoisseur. Nor is it entirely clear that she objects to men's general assumption of control over women'.[9] Newton believes the ending is 'a complicated and not entirely successful juggling act in which all the economic privilege and social authority of the traditional husband-hero must be demonstrated at last but demonstrated without diminishing the autonomy of the heroine.' From this feminist perspective 'most readers *(sic)* of *Pride and Prejudice* find the end less satisfactory than the beginning'.

In Jane Austen's defence, Karen Newman suggests that Darcy's moral subverts the traditional sentimental ending.[10] She suggests it inserts a contradiction that highlights the realism of Jane Austen's view of marriage and the plight of women. Commenting on Darcy's view that the moral is 'perfectly fair', Brownstein states: 'Readers have disagreed, and argued that Elizabeth is either a proto-feminist or a fairy-tale heroine. Jane Austen's irony allows her to be both at once.'[11] Ironically 'her' could refer to either woman. It does seem incredible that in a book filled with irony, Darcy's moral has been taken so seriously.

Charlotte's scheming provides an alternative explanation. Isobel Armstrong outlines the link between *Pride and Prejudice* and Anna Laetitia Barbauld's

contemporary philosophical essay 'On Prejudice': [Jane Austen's] discussion throws light on one aspect of prejudice: it arises when you either cannot see or do not know something, and no two people can ever know or see the same thing'.[12] In this case there are three people who each see a different picture: Elizabeth, Darcy and Charlotte. Elizabeth's ignorance leads her to prejudge the situation and voice a moral conflict that she decides 'will never do' (vol. III, ch. 18). In the same way Darcy is ignorant of Charlotte's hand in the plot. If Charlotte's scheming has been successful their happiness results from her decidedly cunning plan and this lends irony, not only to Darcy's moral but also to his words: 'Whatever bears affinity to cunning is despicable' (vol. I, ch. 8); a similar type of irony can be demonstrated in many of Elizabeth's lines, particularly in the first half of the novel). Darcy is confident that he has been successful when he 'determined at once to know every thing', an impossible quest. Charlotte therefore reflects the power of a clear-thinking rational woman, even within a patriarchal society. A woman controls events and the irony turns on the short-sighted hero. The ending of *Pride and Prejudice* is such a successful juggling act that ingenious readers will find it most satisfactory. The final words must belong to Brownstein's remarkable insight when she concluded that Jane Austen's 'authoritative irony eludes, even mocks, our authoritative critical discourses'.[13]

Notes

1. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice,* ed. James Kinsley, (Oxford, 1990).
2. *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford 1995), p. 202.
3. Rachel M. Brownstein, 'Northanger Abbey', 'Sense and Sensibility', 'Pride and Prejudice', in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,* ed. Edward Copeland and Juliet McMaster (Cambridge, 1997), p. 52.
4. Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen,* p. 164.
5. Deirdre Le Faye, 'Chronology of Jane Austen's Life', in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,* pp. 1-11.
6. Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen,* p. 105.
7. Kingsley Amis, *Rudyard Kipling and his World* (London, 1975), p. 107.
8. Margaret Kirkham, *Jane Austen, Feminism and Fiction* (Brighton, 1983), p. xi.
9. Judith Lowder Newton, *Women, Power and Subversion: Social Strategies in British Fiction, 1778-1860* (Athens, Ga., 1981), pp. 55-85, reprinted in *New Casebooks: 'Sense and Sensibility' and 'Pride and Prejudice'*, ed. Robert Clark (London, 1994), pp. 119-44.
10. Karen Newman, 'Can this Marriage be Saved: Jane Austen Makes Sense of an Ending', *Journal of English Literary History,* 50, pp. 693-708, reprinted in *New Casebooks: 'Sense and Sensibility' and 'Pride and Prejudice'*, ed. Robert Clark (London, 1994), pp. 193-212).
11. Brownstein, p. 54.
12. Isobel Armstrong, Introduction to *Pride and Prejudice,* ed. James Kinsley (Oxford, 1990), pp. vii-xxx.
13. Rachel M. Brownstein, 'Irony and Authority', *'Women's Studies,* 15, pp. 57-69, reprinted in *New Casebooks: 'Sense and Sensibility' and 'Pride and Prejudice'*, ed. Robert Clark (London: 1994), p. 192.

Jane Austen: being rich, being poor

Claire Tomalin

A word of explanation is necessary. I try not to write and read talks, but to speak them, using as few notes as possible. This means there is no text to print, and the ums, repetitions and 'I thinks' make it impossible to transcribe from a recording – the editor of this journal politely likened the transcript to Molly Bloom's monologue. So I have gone back to my notes and tried to set down the main points, necessarily leaving out most of the jokes and asides. My memory of that July Saturday at Chawton is that it was a perfect day, that the audience was friendly and receptive and we all laughed a good deal.

My theme was riches and poverty in relation to Jane Austen, and I began by suggesting that she, whom we know to have been a perfect and much-loved aunt herself, and also part of a closely united family, must have thought a good deal about her own aunts. And I asked myself what her relations with them can have been. I began by considering her paternal aunts, sisters to her good father George, and their situation in life. George Austen was born in 1731, and his two splendidly named sisters were Philadelphia, a year older than him, and Leonora, a year younger. We have all heard of Philadelphia, but Leonora is sometimes missed out of family trees. Her birth killed their mother. Their situation was not improved by a stepmother; and when their father died in 1738 they were sent out to be cared for by relatives. George was able to get an education good enough to make his way to Oxford and a modest career in the church. For the two girls it was more difficult. Some of Philadelphia's story is well known.[1] She was an attractive, lively, penniless girl who could not find a husband in England and so, with exceptional spirit and courage, took herself alone to India in her early twenties. There husbands were easier to catch; all the same she made a loveless marriage. Her husband Tysoe Saul Hancock was officially a surgeon, though like most Englishmen in India at the time he was trying to make a fortune for himself in trade. With this in mind he had attached himself to a young officer of the East India Company, Warren Hastings, a man of outstanding ability.

The Hancocks' marriage remained childless for nine years, at the end of which they moved to live close to Hastings, whose wife had just died. Within a year Philadelphia bore her only child, a daughter, known first as Betsy and then as Eliza. She was god-daughter to Warren Hastings, and probably his daughter too. The Hancock family returned to England with Hastings, then the two men went back to India. Hastings took up with a Mrs Imhoff, whom he married once she was divorced; and he settled £10,000 on his god-daughter Eliza. Hancock died soon after this. He died in debt, but Philadelphia's accounts in Hoare's Bank show that a good many thousands were deposited in her account at this point. This is how Jane Austen's aunt Philadelphia and her cousin Eliza were set up financially in life.

Aunt Philadelphia died when Jane was sixteen. One of the very few passages in Jane Austen's writing that seem to relate to a real member of her family was written

a few months after the death, in an unfinished story, *Catharine, or the Bower.* She described the experience of her heroine's orphaned friend Miss Wynne, who goes out to India, in these words:

> The eldest daughter had been obliged to accept the offer of one of her cousins to equip her for the East Indies, and tho' infinitely against her inclinations had been necessitated to embrace the only possibility that was offered to her, of a Maintenance; Yet it was *one*, so opposite to all her ideas of Propriety, so contrary to her Wishes, so repugnant to her feelings, that she would almost have preferred Servitude to it, had Choice been allowed her –. Her personal Attractions had gained her a husband as soon as she had arrived at Bengal, and she had now been married nearly a twelvemonth. Splendidly, yet unhappily married. United to a Man of double her own age, whose disposition was not amiable, and whose Manners were unpleasing, though his Character was respectable. Kitty had heard twice from her freind since her marriage, but her Letters were always unsatisfactory, and though she did not openly avow her feelings, yet every line proved her to be Unhappy.

This is a striking passage and has been much noticed. Equally striking is that Jane Austen, already a fine novelist at the age of sixteen, gives her characters a conversation about the implications of the story of Miss Wynne. She introduces Camilla Stanley, daughter of a Member of Parliament, who declares that Miss Wynne was very lucky to have been sent out to India to be married to 'an immensely rich man'. To which Catharine responds, 'Do you call it lucky, for a Girl of Genius and Feeling to be sent in quest of a Husband to Bengal, to be married there to a Man of whose Disposition she has no opportunity of judging till her Judgement is of no use to her, who may be a Tyrant, or a Fool or both for what she knows to the Contrary. Do you call *that* fortunate?' Camilla responds blithely with 'she's not the first girl who has gone to the East Indies for a husband and I declare I should think it very good fun if I were as poor'. What we are hearing is real feeling, real argument, powerfully dramatised. I believe we are also learning Jane Austen's response to her Aunt Philadelphia's history, as she perhaps heard it from her daughter Eliza, who had become her friend.

The main facts of Philadelphia's life must have been known to her affectionate brother and his wife, but were probably not much discussed in the family – certainly not the possible adultery. But these things hang in the air, children pick up vibrations, and somebody as quick and clever as Jane Austen would certainly sense that there were gaps and mysteries, something a little odd in her aunt's history. It has always seemed to me too that Eliza herself – charming, lovely Eliza who grew up to marry a French husband – was held in a certain amount of suspicion within the Austen family (though not by Jane), as though she were tainted by the question mark over her origins. First, they tended to describe her as being French, which she was not, merely married to a French husband. Being half French myself I know what the English mean when they describe someone as French. Even in later generations of Austens Eliza gets a bad press: in the Austen-Leigh *Life and Letters* of 1913 she is described as 'pleasure-loving'. But apart from the fact that she owned a very

big bed – commented on by Jane Austen herself, who slept in it in London – and that she liked to give parties, we also know that she devoted much of her life not to pleasure but to the care of her handicapped son Hastings, whom she cherished and kept with her as long as he lived. She nursed her mother through the months of cancer that killed her. She proved a good friend and helper to Jane, and after becoming her sister-in-law through her second marriage to Henry Austen, she was also concerned in the publication of Jane's books.

Where Aunt Philadelphia tackled the problem of being a poor woman in the eighteenth century by, in effect, selling herself, Aunt Leonora appears to have accepted her fate meekly, to all intents and purposes simply vanishing from the record. Her birth date and one mention in a letter by her brother-in-law Hancock was, until recently, all that was known of her. I asked Brian Southam to put a question about Leonora's death date in the Society's *News Letter* and Deirdre Le Faye came up not only with the date – February 1784, when Leonora's niece Jane was seven – but more information about her pathetic life. She died in Islington in north London, which is where she seems to have been sent at the age of five, on the death of her father, to her paternal uncle Stephen Austen, a London bookseller, and his wife Elizabeth. Leonora was 17 when her uncle died, but her foster-mother Elizabeth lived on until Leonora was 36, providing stability and no doubt expecting in exchange a willing pair of hands about the house, and maybe the shop too. Hancock's letter comes after the death of her foster-mother, and he says he will cheerfully contribute something towards Leonora's keep; and it looks as though Philadelphia contributed something later. Fifteen years of her obscure life remained. There are no surviving letters by her and no evidence of visits to her brother in Hampshire (which does not necessarily mean they did not take place). Deirdre Le Faye and Maggie Lane suggest she was brain-damaged, but she may have been only dim and inarticulate, a woman who did not manage to attach anyone to her. It is even possible she got into trouble while she was growing up motherless in mid-eighteenth-century London, which might have made her an undesirable visitor to Steventon rectory. Still it seems likely that Jane Austen knew of her existence, at any rate at her death, which happened within months of the death of her maternal aunt Jane Cooper, the highly respectable wife of a Bath clergyman who caught typhus from her schoolgirl daughter.

Aunts are mythological figures in a young woman's life, offering examples, warnings, points of reference, and the contrasting Philadelphia and Leonora, the one with her abilities, her travels, her adventures, the other dim and crushed, must have helped to give Jane Austen her sense of the crucial importance of money in women's lives – of what having money, or not having it and needing to get hold of it, can do to the character. They may also have contributed to her tenderness towards vulnerable women, something not remarked on as much as it might be, because it is an important feature of her behaviour.

Among these vulnerable and poor women to whom she showed tenderness was Mary Benn, who lived at Chawton. Miss Benn was five years older than Jane

Austen, born in 1770, and her life is like a sad shadow of Jane's. To begin with, she was the sister of a clergyman. The Revd John Benn married young and like some of Jane Austen's brothers was keen on procreation, so much so that there was not much money around for his sister – money or spare room, for he produced at least thirteen children. Miss Benn, though of gentle birth, found herself living in a tumbledown labourer's cottage, described by Jane Austen as 'a wretched abode, it has been terrible for her during the late storms of wind and rain'. Jane Austen also had sharp things to say about the procreative abilities of the Revd Mr Benn: 'I'm quite tired of so many children – Mrs Benn has a thirteenth,' she wrote. *Miss* Benn's procreative abilities went into growing flowers from seed, Jane Austen noted. And her modesty was such that when Martha Lloyd offered to make her a shawl Jane advised her, 'Don't make it too fine or she'll never wear it.' We hear of Miss Benn falling ill and not complaining, of her having to move into lodgings when her house became impossible, of staying overnight with the Austen ladies – and of her early death in January 1816 at the age of 46.

But before her death she enjoyed one moment of glory, and it was provided by Jane Austen. On 27 January 1813, the day the first copy of *Pride and Prejudice* arrived in Chawton, Miss Benn was invited to spend the evening with Mrs Austen and Jane. She had no idea that Jane Austen was an author and no idea of what was in store for her when her two hostesses announced they were going to read aloud. 'Miss Benn dined with us on the very day of the books coming, & in the evening we set fairly at it & read half the 1st vol to her... I believe it passed with her unsuspected. – She was amused, poor soul! That she could not help, you know, with two such people to lead the way; but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth.' The thought of meek Miss Benn sitting in Chawton Cottage while Jane Austen and her mother performed *Pride and Prejudice* for her – something any of us would give a great deal to have experienced – makes one surprising and glowing episode in that sad little life, provided by her friend Jane Austen.

Other women who benefited from her thoughtful kindness were Madame Bigeon and her daughter Madame Perigord, both refugees from Calais in revolutionary France, who became Eliza's servants. Madame Bigeon helped particularly with the care of Hastings, and continued to serve Henry after Eliza's death, at which Jane Austen was present; afterwards she took Madame Perigord back to Chawton to recuperate, an unusual thing to do for a servant. It is clear from Jane Austen's letters that both mother and daughter interested her and she enjoyed talking to them, whether about raspberry jam for Henry or conditions in France. Madame Bigeon found herself in a difficult situation when Henry's bank crashed; and when Jane Austen came to write her will, she left only two specific bequests of money, £50 to Henry, and the same amount, £50, to Madame Bigeon. Again, this is an unusual and unconventional act. And the story does not end here, because after Jane Austen's death Cassandra made regular payments to Madame Perigord – they are all in her bank account at Hoare's – and when she came to write her will she put in a clause asking her brother Charles to go on paying an annuity to Madame Perigord. The Austen family in general gave to charity, seamen's funds and the

Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge for example, but this personal care for individual women in hard circumstances is something particular to Jane and Cassandra Austen.

Charitable words were given to another sad old woman, Mrs Stent, impoverished dependent of the Lloyd family. 'Poor M^rs^ Stent! it has been her lot to be always in the way,' wrote Jane Austen, no doubt telling the truth; only she went on, 'but we must be merciful, for perhaps in time we may come to be M^rs^ Stents ourselves, unequal to anything & unwelcome to anybody.' She was still in her twenties when she wrote this, not an age when most people think kindly about how hard it is to be old, unwanted, sad and lonely – but Jane Austen did.

The most important of her struggling woman friends is Anne Sharp, governess to Edward Austen's children at Godmersham from 1804 to 1806. Jane Austen visited her brother often enough, and was made welcome, but there was also a certain sense that she came to help out with the children. She was perceptibly a poor relation, so that when she had her hair done by the man who attended to her sister-in-law Elizabeth's hair, he charged her half what he charged Elizabeth – kind of him, but it would have been more tactful perhaps for Elizabeth to settle the bill in advance. Elizabeth, a baronet's daughter, did not get on too well with Jane and thought she lacked refinement, brought up as she had been in a crowded country rectory that doubled as a boys' school. Jane made an alliance with Anne Sharp, who was even poorer than she was, so poor she had to earn her living as a governess. Together they put on plays with the children. Anne Sharp dressed up and took male parts, the dancing master, the apothecary, the sergeant; she even played Little Pickle, the naughty boy in *The Spoiled Child,* Mrs Jordan's hit in London. She also wrote her own play for the children, *Pride Punished or Innocence Rewarded.* And when she left Godmersham she and Jane Austen maintained their friendship and corresponded, regularly, affectionately and frankly. Jane invited her to Chawton. She sent her copies of her books – the only person outside the family she chose to honour in this way – and pressed her to be honest in giving her opinions of them. And Miss Sharp responded by praising *Mansfield Park* for its characterisation and moral tendency, 'but as you beg me to be honest' preferred *Pride and Prejudice.* Still more interestingly she wrote of *Emma* that she was pleased with the originality of the heroine, delighted with Mr Knightley and thought Mrs Elton beyond praise, but dissatisfied with Jane Fairfax. It is an interesting point from one who was earning her living in the way Jane Fairfax dreaded so much, and also a good critical judgment, pointing to what many readers feel to be a weakness in *Emma.* Anne Sharp, 'my dearest Anne', was Jane Austen's necessary intelligent friend. She was also someone Jane worried about. When Anne was working as a governess in Yorkshire, looking after the four daughters of a widowed Lady Pilkington, an interesting brother-in-law appeared on the scene, and Jane wrote to another friend how much she hoped he might marry Anne: 'I do so want him to marry her... Oh Sir William Sir William how I will love you if you will love Miss Sharp.' Miss Sharp carries the name of Thackeray's wicked heroine, but here we are almost in the world of Charlotte Brontë. However William did not marry Miss Sharp; like

her friend Jane Austen she remained single and earned her own living. I'll return to her later.

Now something about Jane Austen's own finances. Apart from two small legacies each of £50 received when she was young, she was wholly dependent on her parents and brothers until she was 36, in the spring of 1812, when she got her first payments from a publisher. This is not an easy situation for anyone, even with the best parents and brothers. After the death of her father she received what she once referred to as 'my usual fee' from Mrs Knight, her brother Edward's benefactress which presumably ended in 1812 when good Mrs Knight died: she deserves all honour as Jane's patroness. But Jane was too short of money in 1809, when she was 32, to be in a position to buy back the manuscript of 'Susan' (later *Northanger Abbey*) which Henry had sold to the publisher Crosby in 1803, and for which he wanted £10. A page of accounts from a lost diary for 1807 shows that she spent £45 in that year, over half of it on washing and clothes. She had no rent to pay and she was fed at home, but no one could have considered her anything but poor.

I carried out a very rough, light-hearted reckoning on the basis that we know she earned about £700 from her writing during her lifetime: if you say that represents something like 15 years' work it averages out at about £40 a year. And if you look in economic histories you will find the poverty line was set at about £55 a year for that period. A miner earned £40, an agricultural labourer about £30. So had Jane Austen been dependent on her own earnings, she would have been well below the official poverty line. Contrast her with her Aunt Philadelphia, who was getting through £600 a year in the 1770s when she was living in London; Jane Austen was much closer to penniless Leonora than to successful Philadelphia.

There is an important moment when Jane sent her sister Cassandra a piece of dress material in September 1813 and begged her not to pay her for it, because 'I am rich'. Of course she was not rich at all, but she was expressing her joy and pride in having money in her hands that she had earned, after all the years of dependence. Perhaps only those who have been through the same alteration of circumstances will properly appreciate its significance.

Everyone knows that Walter Scott rebuked her for being too keen on the money theme in her novels. In this century W. H. Auden took up the same point in his lines addressed to Lord Byron:

You could not shock her more than she shocks me;
Beside her Joyce seems innocent as grass.
It makes me most uncomfortable to see
An English spinster of the middle class
Describe the amorous effects of 'brass',
Reveal so frankly and with such sobriety
The economic basis of society.

An Edinburgh woman told me a charming story about Auden, who was a friend of her family when she was a girl. He overheard her father telling her she should read the works of Scott as a very important part of her cultural heritage. 'No,' said

Auden, 'tell her to read the works of Jane Austen.' His point about economics is absolutely right of course; money is one of the central pins in all the novels, and some of the finest passages and deadliest jokes deal with poverty and women's responses to the threat of poverty. Mrs John Dashwood's bravura collaring of her female in-laws' inheritance in thirteen exchanges of speech with her husband is a piece of dramatic writing that could go straight on to the stage, and one of the funniest and most telling passages in all Jane Austen's work. Elizabeth Bennet's joke about first beginning to think she might marry Mr Darcy when she saw Pemberley is funny precisely because there is a sharp sliver of truth in it. It is set up for us by her earlier flirtation with Wickham. We remember that she had no difficulty in falling out of love with him once her aunt Gardiner warned her that he would not do, attractive as he was, since neither of them had any money. Her sensible and prudent behaviour at that point of the story prepares us for her joke about the attractions of Pemberley, alongside those of Darcy, of course.

Lucy Steele, clawing and lying her way into getting the money she knows she's got to have if her life is to be as she wants is partly funny, partly hideous and wholly effective. There is of course much that is bleak in Jane Austen's novels: I recall a memorable talk given by C.V. Wedgwood to this meeting on the tragic aspect of her work. The passage from *The Bower* which I read out contains a thoroughly bleak story of the girl shipped to India for a husband. The Watson sisters face another harsh, bleak outlook, terrified at what will happen to them, how they will live when their father dies, how they will find husbands; and forced to endure humiliations, particularly from their sister-in-law (sisters-in-law do badly in Jane Austen), who looks them over with 'triumphant compassion', enough to curdle the blood.

Then there is the Price household, one of Jane Austen's finest pieces, in their Portsmouth house where the walls are too thin and where Fanny's mother, sister to Lady Bertram and Mrs Norris as she is, is shown defeated by poverty and too many children. Fanny herself, a poor person transferred to a rich man's house where she endures loneliness, mockery and servitude, is another study of the effects of poverty, because the least attractive aspects of her character are formed by the treatment handed out to her as a poor relation – her timidity, her jealousy, her primness. Jane Austen gives us a deeply felt picture of this particular ordeal. The worst thing for Fanny is the lack of a someone to talk to on an equal footing. Her brother William is lost to her; her cousin Edmund, who does befriend her, is often absent and proves unreliable; so she finds herself isolated among the rich and uncongenial people to whom she is required to be grateful. That may have been Jane Austen's idea of hell. She gave something similar to Jane Fairfax, unable to communicate with anyone, forced to endure the condescension and patronage of Mrs Elton and the cruel teasing of fortunate Emma and Frank. Although her aunt and grandmother were loving, you don't wonder that Jane Fairfax was inclined to retire to her bedroom with a headache, there to brood over the prospect of slavery as a governess.

Jane Fairfax's fear of becoming a governess takes us back to Anne Sharp and her friendship with Jane Austen. One of her last and greatest letters was addressed to 'My dearest Anne', a letter full of courage and also of jokes. Jane is dying and knows it, but her wit and humour shine through every sentence. She jokes about how she has become 'a very genteel portable sort of invalid'. She jokes about how 'if I live to be an old woman I must expect to wish I had died now, blessed in the tenderness of such a family, & before I had survived either them or their affection'. There is also in this letter a moment of unshakeable frankness about her sister-in-law Mary, wife to her eldest brother James. Mary has for once behaved generously and offered her carriage to take Jane to Winchester, but Jane has to speak the truth to her friend Anne, that Mary 'is not in the main a liberal minded woman'. You want to raise a cheer that she is not so defeated by impending death as to be more polite about her sister-in-law than she really feels.

This letter also contains the curious passage about Galigai de Concini. The context is that Anne Sharp has told her that her employer, Lady Pilkington, has written from Paris for some advice, and Anne remarks on her weakness of character. Jane comments on this, then says 'Galigai de Concini for ever & ever'. Galigai de Concini was at the French court of Marie de Medici, and as the wife of a courtier who fell out of favour she found herself accused of being a sorceress and so having influenced the Queen. She was tried and burnt to death, but first she defended herself, saying she was not a sorceress and that her only power was in the strength of her mind, the strength of her spirit. If you have a strong mind, a strong spirit, she said, then you exert power over other people.

I think Jane Austen was saying to Anne Sharp, remember that strength of spirit, strength of mind is what matters. This is what will keep you going through life. And indeed it did. Jane Austen died shortly after writing this letter, but Anne Sharp lived on until 1853. She never married but she took her friend's advice and kept up the strength of her character. She earned her living, and succeeded in running her own boarding school in Everton, outside Liverpool (you think of Elizabeth Watson saying 'I would rather do anything than be Teacher at a school'). But Miss Sharp made a success of her school. In 1926 it was reported in *Notes and Queries* that it had occupied 'two handsome semi-detached villas in Everton, well placed with gardens and a beautiful view over the Mersey'. Everton was a fashionable district, a favourite residential suburb of Liverpool in Miss Sharp's time, and there she lived out her life, retiring in 1841. Another tiny piece of testimony comes from a Mrs Creague-Haward, who wrote from Ottery St Mary to *The Times* on 12 February 1926 about Anne Sharp: 'My aunt Miss Middleton knew her well and often spoke of her. From what she said I gather that Miss Sharp was a clever, rather dominant woman, much thought of in Everton society of her day.' She also said she did not speak of her earlier life, which is sad because she could have boasted of her friendship with Jane Austen. But she preserved Jane's last letter, and left it in safe hands when she died.

Anne Sharp makes a great contrast with Jane Austen's aunts, with whom this talk started, one of whom felt she had to fight her way in the world by getting a

husband, and getting money for her child by means she perhaps did not much like; while the younger aunt simply collapsed before the challenge of her life, and became a person of no account. A new pattern of woman appears with Anne Sharp, who took something from her friend Jane Austen's example and advice. When she came south to see Cassandra Austen in 1820 she met her nephew, James Austen-Leigh, who described her as 'horridly affected but rather amusing'. What does that remind us of? Of little Jane Austen aged twelve, in Kent, described by her Kentish cousin Phila Walter, as 'whimsical and affected'. In these contexts, perhaps we should read 'affected' as 'intelligent' – and end with a quotation from *Northanger Abbey,* 'a woman especially, if she have the misfortune of knowing anything, should conceal it as well as she can.'

Notes

1. After I had given this talk, Robin Vick told me of his discovery that Philadelphia was apprenticed at the age of fifteen to a Covent Garden milliner for five years. At the end of her apprenticeship she made the decision to go to India. [*See above, pp. 19-23.* Ed.]
2. Hancock's age was given as 64 in 1775 on his tombstone in India, but Robin Vick has discovered his birth certificate, which shows that he was born on Christmas Day 1723, making him not twice Philadelphia's age at the time of their marriage, but only seven years older than her.

The Jane Austen Society



Report for 2000

The Jane Austen Society

Founded in 1940 by Miss Dorothy Darnell
Registered Charity No. 1040613

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Acting Hon. Secretary Alwyn Austen

Membership Secretary Rosemary Culley, 22 Belmont Grove, Bedhampton, Havant, Hants PO9 3PU Tel: 023 9247 5855

e-mail: rosemary@sndc.demon.co.uk

Committee Fiona Ainsworth,* Alwyn Austen, Tom Carpenter,* Tony Corley, Maggie Lane, Deirdre Le Faye, David Selwyn, Diana Shervington,* Patrick Stokes,* Robin Vick

* co-opted

Accountants to the Society Messrs Sheen Stickland & Co, Alton

Editor David Selwyn

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Front cover: Vindictive Going It (n.d.) *Lt. Herbert Grey Austen. Watercolour over pencil. Reproduced by permission of Lt.Cmdr. Francis H. Austen. (See pp 16-17)*

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From the Chairman

The Society can look back with great satisfaction over the events of the last twelve months, with the celebration of Jane Austen and the Austen family as far afield as Bermuda, Bath, Tonbridge, Winchester and Westminster Abbey. All this has been an ambitious programme involving a large number of members in the fulfilment of projects long in planning and carried through on a wholly voluntary basis. The roll of such members is considerable, too numerous to be listed here. Nonetheless, the deep gratitude of the Society should be placed on record.

In this regard, it is with particular sadness that we also record the resignation of our Hon. Secretary. Susan McCartan dedicated herself to the interests of the Society for over eight years, a period which – largely thanks to her efforts – has seen such a remarkable expansion in our activities and the heartening growth of the Groups and Branches. Our good wishes go with her for the future.

Brian Southam

Professor Nicholas Hammond CBE DSO FBA (1907-2001)

Professor Hammond, a distinguished member of the Society, passed away on 24 March 2001 in his 94th year. Attended by Mrs Hammond, he was a regular and welcome presence at our AGMs. His career was remarkable. He was both a classical scholar of world renown and a war hero. His fluency in Greek and Albanian (not to speak of a wide and flourishing moustache) enabled him to pass as a native of these lands. Dropped behind enemy lines in the Second World War, he played a leading part in Balkan resistance. Twice mentioned in despatches, he was awarded the DSO for his success in organising guerrilla operations.

A man of great warmth and modesty, 'Nick' Hammond - sometime Headmaster of Clifton College, Professor of Greek at the University of Bristol, and a Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, man of letters and man of action – will be long remembered, as he was honoured in his lifetime, with affection and respect.

B.C.S

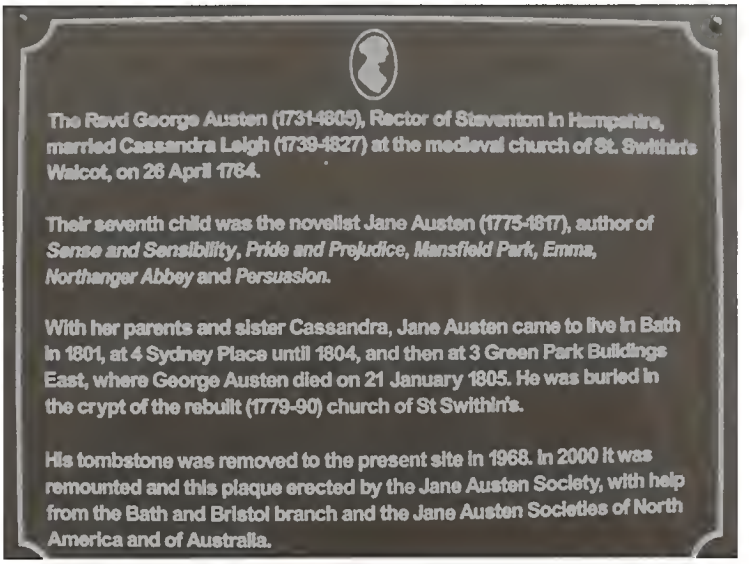
Bath and Bristol

Our Group's programme of events for 2000 began with Cassandra's Tea Party held at 4 Sydney Place. This annual social occasion coincided this year with Cassandra's birthday (9 January) and as well as enjoying a delicious tea, members were entertained to some readings, Chris Viveash's selection from *Persuasion* being particularly memorable.

The Mansion House at Newton Park, a listed building dating from the 1760s, was the venue for our Annual Meeting and Lecture in April. Some 50 members and friends heard a stimulating talk from Maggie Lane, who examined how the power of mobility affected the relationship between the sexes in Jane Austen's novels, and revealed to us some of the subtleties of social status inherent in references to gigs, barouches, curricles and chaises. Maggie's talk, entitled 'A heroine in a hack post-chaise', was complemented by Angela Barlow's thoughtful readings of selected passages from the novels.

Lyme Regis was the destination for our summer visit in June. Diana Shervington kindly acted as our guide through the town and our visit included the Philpot Museum, to which she has loaned a collection of Austen memorabilia. Through Diana's good offices, we were also fortunate to be gain access to the privately-owned Pyne House, where Jane is believed to have stayed in 1804. The afternoon was concluded with a welcome cream tea at the Hotel Alexander.

In October, we had the satisfaction to see completed a project which had been occupying many minds for many years. This was the re-siting and renovation of the tomb (the ledgerstone) of the Revd George Austen at St Swithin's, Walcot,



(Photo by Robert Coles)

Bath. On Saturday 7 October, members of our Group gathered at St Swithin's for a ceremony attended by the Mayor of Bath, family descendants of the Revd George Austen and members of the Society from all over the country as well as representatives of the Jane Austen Society of North America and of the Jane Austen Society of Australia. The ceremony, attended by about 100 people, was followed by evensong in the church and tea at the Francis Hotel in Queen Square.

Our thanks are extended to Michael and Anne Davis for allowing us to meet in 4 Sydney Place and for all the events which they have successfully organised.

Gavin Turner

Cambridge

Our year started in March with a brilliant talk by Henry Rice, one of our members and a descendant, on his unpublished research on Eliza de Feuillide. He gave new insights and information which members found fascinating.

In June we visited King's College Library. The librarian had kindly set out an exhibition of some of the library's Austen treasures and he gave a most interesting introductory talk. In 1990 Dorothy Warren gave her collection of Austen manuscripts and books to the library, which acknowledged her gift as one of the most splendid donations it had ever received. The second great benefactor has been, and continues to be, David Gilson, who has already given over 1000 items from his collection to the library. Among the many treasures we saw were all the first editions of the novels; an autograph letter from Jane Austen to John Murray; the manuscript of *Sanditon*, and Jane's copy of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso,* later owned by Virginia Woolf who gave it to John Maynard Keynes, a great admirer of Jane Austen, whose first editions of her works are also at King's.

Several members attended the AGM at Chawton and the events, so splendidly arranged by Susan McCartan, which marked the double anniversary. They were all most enjoyable, especially the picnic and readings at Box Hill.

The group would wish to acknowledge the enormous encouragement, help, and support which Susan McCartan gave to us when we were starting up and subsequently. Nothing was too much trouble for her and her dedication to the job of Hon. Secretary and the wellbeing of the Society was remarkable. She will be remembered by our members with affection and respect.

In September we met to see *Clueless*. There were mixed views about the film, but the discussion which followed was lively and entertaining.

Sadly, we have to record the death of our oldest member, Professor Nicholas Hammond, distinguished scholar and classicist, who died recently at the age of 93. Our sympathy goes out to Margaret, his wife. Together they made the annual pilgrimage to Chawton over many, many years, as they did again last summer. Vale.

Audrey Stenner

Kent

Our AGM in March was followed by lively, thought-provoking talk by Dr Bill

Hutchings on the Juvenilia.

On 3 June we were at Godmersham for the day, again being allowed the use of the church, as the house was still not available. In the morning Miss Susan Watkins gave us an interesting talk on Regency houses, and after our picnic lunches in the grounds the Classic Reaction Theatre Company entertained us excellently with what purported to be amateur theatricals from 'Massfield Park', as the programme called it.

16 September was the long-looked-for day when our president, Mr Nicolson, unveiled a plaque commemorating the Revd George Austen's connection, as both pupil and master, with Tonbridge School. Afterwards, Mr Brian Southam talked most interestingly on George Austen's early years, and on what life would have been like at such a school in the 18th century.

At our annual dinner in November we were pleased to welcome Professor Michael Wheeler, who spoke about the Chawton House Library.

Also in November, our discussion group, which meets twice a year, was delighted to be invited for the second time to Goodnestone Park. Altogether, we feel, a satisfactory year.

Bunty Goldup

Northern

On 5 March we held a discussion at St John's Centre in Wakefield. 25 members met for a very lively session on *Mansfield Park,* followed by afternoon tea, catered by the committee, and a chance to socialise with fellow members.

The next event was our first Study Day held in association with Leeds University. On 1 April, 30 people met to hear Charmian Knight speak on 'Jane Austen: New Readings for the New Century', and after lunch Luke Spencer on 'Structure, Style and Purpose in the Novels', an examination of genre and composition. This was voted an excellent day by all present and, such was its success, it was repeated in June. We anticipate that this will become an annual event.

In a summer of erratic weather, 24 members met on 17 June for our first summer outing. The venue was Newby Hall and the weather superb. Guided tours of the house focused on Newby at the time of Jane Austen, and members also took advantage of the magnificent gardens.

In September, our second discussion was held at St Columba's Church Hall, Leeds. On this occasion the choice of our members was *Emma.* The day included afternoon tea, a bookstall, photographic displays and a literary quiz. 32 members and guests enjoyed sharing their thoughts and opinions on various aspects of the novel.

Finally, our first AGM was held on 21 October in the medieval setting of King's Manor, part of the University of York. 40 members attended the business meeting, after which a further 25 people joined the audience to listen to Bill Hutchings of Manchester University who delivered a highly stimulating and entertaining talk entitled, '"I could die of laughter at it": kinds of comedy in Jane Austen's novels'.

George Austen: Pupil, Usher and Proctor

Brian Southam

History has been unkind to Mr Austen. As one of the historians of Tonbridge School has put it, George Austen 'survives only as the father' of Jane Austen. Accordingly, Mr Austen is soon dismissed, deserving to be remembered only on account of his novelist daughter.

Well, this disparagement of Mr Austen is totally unjust; and this afternoon I would like to take a first step towards understanding Mr Austen in terms of his own achievements, in particular his achievements here, in this School.

In trying to do this, we are helped very little by the existing biographies of Jane Austen. To take the latest, the excellent *Life* by Claire Tomalin. Here Mr Austen is described as a 'hard-working' schoolboy and as a student at Oxford, 'happy and successful'. Of his life at the School, we learn only that he was here as a pupil for six years and that he studied 'some mathematics but mostly the classics'. In another recent Jane Austen biography, the one by Professor David Nokes, we are told that Mr Austen 'remembered Tonbridge School with a good deal of affection' and that he learned 'to thrive under the patient discipline and sound instruction of his masters'. His return to Tonbridge – he came back as a teacher – is described, in the briefest possible terms, as a 'period of schoolmastering'.

To be fair, these writers were commissioned to produce biographies of Jane Austen, not of her father, and biographers are of course free to use the available space to best advantage, as they think fit. However, the unhappy consequence is that Mr Austen gets short shrift. We are left wondering – what did he really experience here as a pupil and as a teacher? and what part did these experiences play in his later life and in the upbringing of his children, Jane included?

The biographies of Jane Austen, both new and old, give us little to go on. We are left with the prevailing image of a learned and saintly man, happy with his pupils (as a clergyman, he ran a small tutoring establishment in his Rectory), happy with his parish and beloved in the bosom of his family. In a generalised sense, and as a broad-brush portrait, this is fair enough. But it answers none of the questions we would like to ask about his Tonbridge years, about his character as a schoolboy, and the part that Tonbridge played in shaping his later life. Of course, all this is too large a subject for a Saturday afternoon talk. So I shall confine myself to taking a few points, some obvious, some less so.

Firstly, then, what was the School like when George Austen arrived as a ten-year-old, in 1741? It consisted of little more than a small but substantial stone building, dating back almost 200 years, to just after the School's foundation in 1553. At the heart of this was the school-room itself in which the teaching took place: a room no more than 40ft long and 25ft wide. Here the 'Master or Pedagogue' (as the original Charter describes him) together with the 'undermaster or Usher' carried out their teaching, the Master at one end of the room, the Usher at the other. The 53 boys, as there were at that time, were seated in benches on either side of

the room, facing inwards. There were nine classes, running from the lowest up to 'Prima Classis', the top form of the School. It was a deliberately hierarchical arrangement: the boys knew exactly where they stood in the School. The Prima Classis was seated nearest to the Master, the bottom class, furthest away; and in each class the boys were seated in order of merit.

It hardly needs saying that this was not always a scene of studious peace and quiet. Much of the teaching was conducted aloud and the boys' responses too. So there was always a good deal of talking going on, and towards the end of the day, sometimes shouting, when patience and tempers were wearing thin.

For the school day, and the terms themselves, were taxing. The day began in the school-room at 7 o'clock, with prayers, followed by four hours of lessons, a break of two hours, and then starting at one, another solid block of four or five hours, depending on the season. The teaching day closed, as it began, with the saying of prayers. This was the routine for 5 1/2 days a week, ten or even eleven months of the year.

Tonbridge was largely a boarding school: 80% were boarders, the others 'non boarders' or 'town boys', as they were called. The boarders came from the leading families of West Kent and East Sussex. Some had been sending their sons to Tonbridge over four, five or more generations. Pupils also came from London and a small contingent from the West Indies, the sons of prosperous plantation families.

We can judge from this that Tonbridge was a Grammar School with a good reputation. The 'Grammar' in the School's name carried a special meaning. It meant that the education provided here was devoted to studying the classics, almost entirely Latin literature, with a very small element of Greek. The Statutes required the Master and Usher to speak in Latin to those pupils who understood the language. This could be counted a good proportion of the school, as the Statutes also required boys to be admitted already writing 'competently' in 'both English and Latin' and able to read 'perfectly'. As they moved up from class to class they tackled authors of increasing difficulty. The bottom form, sometimes called the 'Irregulars', began with Aesop and thereafter the progression was from Aesop to Terence, from Terence to Virgil, from Virgil to Cicero and onwards to Caesar, Horace and other Latin authors, ancient and modern.

As part of the standard curriculum, the boys also learned essay and precis-writing. As extras, taught by visiting instructors outside the normal school hours, there were Writing, that is, penmanship plus 'accounts' (which was basic arithmetic): these came together at £1.4s.9d per annum; French, at two guineas; and Dancing at £2.15s. These extras were relatively expensive, remembering that the annual cost of 'classical learning', inclusive of the boarding charge, was no more than £20, and that the 'town boys' benefited from the fact that Tonbridge was founded as a Free Grammar School, generously endowed by its Founder and subsequently by the Skinners' Company in London.

When George Austen arrived at Tonbridge in 1741, he was ranked 42nd of the School's 53 pupils. He was a boy of some ability and was placed top of the 9th

form, with eleven other 'Irregulars' below him. He was not without friends. Apart from the other 'town boys' who entered the School with him, there was a cousin, Henry Austen, ranked 2nd in the School. In the years that followed, we can chart George's upward progress. In 1742, he was 36th and top of the 8th form; in 1743, 19th, and top of the 7th form. In this same year, his cousin Henry was top of the School. Over the next two years, George remained stationary at 5th, and in his last two years, 1746 and 47, stationary again, third in the School.

During these years the School's fortunes were fluctuating. By 1745, there were only 25 boys on the roll. Twenty years earlier, Tonbridge was more than three times this size. The fall in numbers reflected a change in the School's leadership. For George's first two years, the Master was the Revd Richard Spencer, one of the most successful in the School's history. Following Spencer's arrival in 1714, the numbers rose from 32 to a high point, ten years later, of no fewer than 80 boys. But in 1743, Spencer resigned, having served for almost 30 years. His place was taken by the Revd James Cawthorn. The effect of this change was immediate: withdrawals from the School between 1743 and 1744 reduced the roll from 44 to 26 and it was to be some years before the numbers reached 50 again. There were two reason for this. Firstly, as a native of Yorkshire, Cawthorn was unknown in Kent and Sussex: he was viewed as a foreigner. In addition, he was inexperienced at the time of his appointment: he was only 24. Combined, these were not factors to inspire confidence amongst the parents.

Although Cawthorn's Headship was not counted among the School's most successful, nonetheless he was undoubtedly one of its most cultivated and accomplished masters, one of the very few to earn a place in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. For he was widely known as a poet and his work can be found in a number of eighteenth century anthologies. He was also very keen on music, and an enthusiastic, if unskilled, horseman. Apparently he thought nothing of riding to London and back to attend a concert. As far as the School was concerned, Cawthorn was famed, and feared, as a disciplinarian. He ruled the school-room with a rod of iron, demanding the highest standards of work and behaviour. His great enthusiasm was the teaching of rhetoric, that is, the art of using language to persuade or influence people through skilful oratory. This was not a natural gift. Rhetoric had to be studied and practised, for it was conducted in Latin and the speaker was required to present his case within a framework of set rules, using the strict formulations of classical logic. All the histories of the School repeat this story: how Cawthorn would throw down on the floor a volume of Virgil or Shakespeare as a prize and challenge 'his pupils to speak a speech against him'. There is no record of anyone defeating him (hardly surprising since he was judge as well as challenger) but these contests provided a good preparation for university, since they were along the lines of the formal disputations at Oxford and Cambridge, exercises which formed a major part of the system of examination.

It was a regime under which George Austen prospered. He benefited, too, from the School endowments. In July 1747, at the age of 16, he went up to St John's College, Oxford, entering into a Fellowship reserved by the College's Founder

for a scholar from Tonbridge School. Four years later, in 1751, he gained his BA; and in 1753, again thanks to his Tonbridge connection, was awarded a Smythe Exhibition. This supported him at Oxford for a further seven years of studying divinity towards ordination. In 1754, now aged 23, he gained his MA. (It is worth pointing out that nowadays the Oxford Bachelor of Arts, like Cambridge's, is raised to Master of Arts without further examination, whereas in George Austen's time it was a genuine achievement, a degree gained by examination.) Later this same year, George Austen returned to Tonbridge as Usher, working alongside his former teacher Mr Cawthorn.

His appointment is worth looking at. In the first place, the choice of Usher lay wholly in Mr Cawthorn's hands. Under the Statutes, the Master was free to select whomsoever he wanted. Given the fact that the two men would be teaching together, in the same school-room, day in day out, the Usher had to be someone compatible, someone Cawthorn was confident he could work with, someone whose discipline and scholarship he could trust. It was not a post lightly given, and the men who filled it were teachers of high calibre. George Austen's predecessor was the Revd Johnson Towers, who in the course of time was to succeed Cawthorn as Master. This was in 1761, on the latter's death, and Towers remained in office, with considerable success, until his own death in 1772. Another Usher of this period was the Revd Miles Cooper, who was to become the President of King's College, New York, the institution which we know today as Columbia University.

In this light, George Austen's appointment as Usher is about as high a testimony as one can imagine: a testimony not only to his learning and his abilities as a teacher, but also to his qualities as a colleague. Anyone who lasted under Cawthorn as George Austen did had survived a baptism of fire and won his spurs.

Across these years, from 1754 to 1757, George Austen was given leave of absence from St John's, keeping his name on the College books, and residing there as a Fellow during the School's summer holidays. Wanting to continue his theological studies, in March 1757 he resigned his Tonbridge post and returned to full-time residence at Oxford, working for the Bachelor of Divinity degree. He was appointed the College Assistant Chaplain; and a year later, in the academic year 1759-60, served as Junior Proctor of the University.

The biographies of Jane Austen tell us his nickname, 'the handsome Proctor'. Tall and handsome he was, but what the biographies fail to tell us is the range and onerousness of his duties. Some of these were purely ceremonial. Together with the Senior Proctor, he was responsible for supporting the Vice Chancellor at important occasions and ceremonies. A more active duty was the administration of University examinations; this, for example, involved conducting the formal disputations on grammar and logic that were part of the BA examination. There was also the overseeing and conferring of degrees. The duty most colourful of all, though by far the least pleasant, was walking the streets at night, together with a posse of Proctor's men, calling at taverns, coffee-houses, and other likely places of riot and disorder, to stop any brawling between townsmen and gownsmen.

These were the Proctors' routine tasks, the daily and weekly round of

administrative and disciplinary duties. Beyond these, the Proctors held considerable powers in the arena of University government and it was here that George Austen's independence and strength of character were put to the test. During his term of office, an intense power struggle developed, a contest between those who wanted to amend the University Statutes, maintaining that the University could do this on its own authority, and those who argued to the contrary – that the letter of the Statutes must be adhered to, and that amendments could only be made by Royal licence, that is, with the agreement of the Crown. It was a dispute which split the University, and the opposing parties campaigned in a heated political atmosphere, the 'amenders' being identified with the Tories, the 'defenders' of the Statutes with the Whigs.

The 'amenders'' campaign was led by the greatest of all constitutional lawyers, William Blackstone, the first Oxford Professor of English Law, a formidable opponent, and, at this time, the most powerful of the University politicians. On the other side, the 'defenders' were vocal but disorganised. It was not until the new Proctors, William Wright and George Austen, took office that the opposition began to take shape. By mid-July 1759, the Proctors had assumed the 'defenders'' leadership. A few days before the decisive debate, held in Convocation, the University's governing body, they circulated their position-paper round the College common-rooms. This set out in full their objections to change.

In the event, the debate was short and stormy. Since debates had to be in Latin, speeches were comparatively rare. But on this occasion the Vice Chancellor himself set out 'to refute' the Proctors' position-paper. 'In a long Latin speech,' he 'called on' the Proctors to do their duty and 'take a vote. This they refused to do'. Ignoring the abuse showered upon them, they 'proceeded to impose their proctorial veto'. [1] This put an end to the Convocation debate and prevented any amendment of the Statutes. Thus George Austen played a brave and determined part in the bear-pit of University politics. On a matter of deep principle, he was prepared to stick his neck out and face down the abuse and vilification which he knew would follow, as indeed it did.

In this short time I have tried to do nothing more than outline something of George Austen's School and University life. My purpose has been to show how inadequately Mr Austen has been served; a few conventional phrases are simply not good enough: his being the devoted parish priest, the loving father, the clergyman of learning and piety and so on. What is missing is a brief biography, giving us the life of someone shaped by Tonbridge and Oxford, a father who contributed to his daughter's gifts, perhaps in ways we shall never understand. What remains to be researched are his Tonbridge years as a pupil and teacher, and his Oxford years as student and Proctor, these being the prelude to the years of his marriage and his later life, and the nurturing and encouragement of Jane Austen's genius.

At least, in mounting this plaque we have taken a step in the right direction. I refer to a single detail. There has always been confusion about George Austen's exact years as Usher. Some histories of the School say 1754 to 1758, others 1758 to 1761. In fact, they were 1754 to 1757, just as the plaque tells us.

To conclude: the names of many Austens and Wellers (the maternal line – Elizabeth Weller was George Austen's grandmother) can be found in the School rolls of the eighteenth century. They were a Kent family, always in this part of Kent, and in George Austen's time a Sevenoaks and Tonbridge family. It is therefore fitting that the organizers of today's event should be the Kent Branch of the Jane Austen Society; that the unveiling of the plaque should have been performed by Mr Nigel Nicolson, President of the Kent Branch; and particularly fitting that the moving spirit of this whole event should be an Austen, Mr Alwyn Austen, the Chairman of the Kent Branch, a direct descendant of George Austen (lineally, his great-great-grandson), and we are more than delighted that he is here today to see his brain-child brought to maturity. I would also like to thank the Headmaster for making it possible for this event to take place.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I think you will understand why today's occasion has been so important to the Society, how grateful we are to the School for hosting the event, and how pleased we are that you have been able to join us in this celebration. For the first time, George Austen is memorialised in his own School and in his own right.

This is the edited text of a speech delivered on the occasion of the placing of a plaque to the Revd George Austen at Tonbridge School on 16 September 2000.

Notes

1 Ed. L.S. Sutherland and L.S Mitchell, *The History of the University of Oxford*, Vol. 5 (Oxford, 1986), pp 200-201.



Transforming the Literary Landscape

Michael Wheeler

In the Hampshire village of Chawton, where Jane Austen wrote her most famous novels, practitioners from a number of different disciplines, from archaeology to social history, are currently transforming the English literary landscape – literally and metaphorically. Chawton House, the manor house that once belonged to Jane Austen's brother Edward Knight, and which she knew well, is being restored to accommodate the new Centre for the Study of Early English Women's Writing (1600-1830), and a magnificent collection of over 6,300 books of the period, now located in the USA.

Stand at the top of the drive to Chawton House and you see the archetypal English scene. In the distance, the main house, Elizabethan at the core with Jacobean ranges to north and south, and currently under conservation (and scaffolding). To the right, St Nicholas Church. We know that the second Rector was instituted here in 1289, although most of the original church was destroyed in a fire and rebuilt in 1871. To the left, Chawton House Stables, built in 1591 and now converted to a dwelling house, currently under restoration. In the foreground a small broadleaf lime tree planted in 1999. Considered as a text, the estate has undergone frequent revision down the centuries. Currently it is being thoroughly re-edited!

When Edward Austen was adopted by the childless Knights of Godmersham, Kent, and Chawton, this clergyman's son was catapulted into a higher social stratum. Mr Knight died at Chawton in 1794, and Edward changed his name to Knight on the death of Mrs Knight in 1812. Three years earlier, in 1809, he had been able to move his mother and his sisters, Cassandra and Jane, and Martha Lloyd, from rented property in Castle Square, Southampton, to the cottage in Chawton village. Now known as Jane Austen's House, it is visited by over 30,000 people each year (as many as 50,000 immediately after the television adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*).

Jane Austen visited her brothers and nieces and nephews when they were in residence at the 'Great House'. Edward died in 1852, to be succeeded by Edward II, who was followed by the dynamic Montagu Knight. 'Uncle Monty' clearly spent enormous amounts of time, energy and money on restoring the house, and probably involved Lutyens in the design of fireplaces and of external terracing. After the Second World War, however, the great days of the house were over, and by 1987, when the present Richard Knight inherited, the sale of the leasehold was a foregone conclusion.

Enter Sandy Lerner, an American businesswoman and the driving force behind the current project. Sandy had been building up an important collection of early English women's writing in the USA; and when an attempt to turn Chawton House estate into a golf course had failed, she seized the opportunity to rescue it from dereliction, and to foster the rediscovery of forgotten women writers of earlier centuries in a unique context.

Here is the vision for Chawton: set in a uniquely appropriate cultural context, the international Centre for the Study of Early English Women's Writing (1600-1830) will, in liaison with the University of Southampton, give a lead in the current work of recovering and studying women writers of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and thus of transforming the historic literary landscape. Staff and students of the University can play a major role in fulfilling this mission. The Centre will collaborate with colleagues from Britain and around the world, and particularly in the United States, where so much important work is going on. Visitors to Chawton House Library will be able to consult the collection that we will be bringing back to England in two years time, thanks to the Bosack & Kruger Foundation. Guided by Professor Isobel Grundy, Trustee, Katherine Moulton has been in charge of building up the collection (which continues to grow) in Redmond, Washington, and has initiated the Novels On-Line programme (www.chawton.org). The collection contains over 400 anonymous titles, offering tantalizing possibilities for those interested in the detection of authorship and gender differences between authors.

The Centre will be non-residential, but its accommodation will be generous. We envisage using one room on the top floor for our publications programme, to include a history of women's writing in English, which Professor Cora Kaplan and I are currently planning with a leading publisher; another for the Cambridge Edition of Jane Austen, of which I am joint general editor with Professor Janet Todd of Glasgow University; and some other rooms for the use of visiting scholars as carrels. Jane Austen is the presiding genius of the project, but of the hundreds of her literary sisters and mothers who will be studied at Chawton, some are well known, others lived locally, and most have remained unread and unknown for a couple of centuries.

In the Arts Faculty of the University of Southampton we are planning a number of projects in preparation for the opening of the Centre, including an MA programme, a conference in July 2002 on the adaptation of Jane Austen and the classic English novel from text to screen, and all kinds of developments in terms of research and teaching. Being a country house study centre, Chawton values its official link with a major University, mainly for its staff but also for its infrastructure. At Chawton itself the main public rooms on the ground floor lend themselves to use for occasional day conferences and seminars, and for other events, such as Regency balls (with lessons).

The education of the eye continues outside, and to review the changing face of the estate over time is to engage with changes in society as well as aesthetics. The restoration being undertaken under the leadership of Jane Alderson, Director of Chawton Estate, and of Adrian Thatcher, Restoration Project Manager, is based upon detailed research into the history of the site. In Austenesque terms, we are indeed 'improving the estate', but without chopping down avenues of trees - in fact, quite the reverse. (Strangely enough, we keep finding parallels between our estate and Sotherton in *Mansfield Park* – the novel that she completed soon after a big family reunion at Chawton House!)



Chawton Church and the Great House,1809 *(Jane Austen Memorial Trust)*

The walled garden presents an opportunity for us to involve students from local colleges and schools in repair and restoration of the walls and beds, and this really expresses the multidisciplinary nature of the project. The park is one of the delights of the estate, although the years and the thunderstorms have certainly taken their toll of many of the older and larger trees. So a replanting programme has been put in place, in line with the eighteenth century fashion for 'clumps'.

In association with the University, then, Chawton House Library will be enabling conservation and study of its collections; increasing access to the collections via the website and Novels On-line; creating educational opportunities for life-long learning; offering lectures, seminars and day conferences; fostering research in early English women's writing; developing a publications programme; forging links with other centres; liaising with courses involved in restoration, conservation and husbandry; collaborating with schools, colleges and universities in their projects; commissioning literary tours, cultural events and live arts; and seeking funding for Chawton House Library projects.

I have very much enjoyed speaking about the project at meetings of JAS branches, as well as at last year's AGM. The staff at Chawton look forward very much to welcoming members of JAS to the new Library in the summer of 2003.

This article is based upon Michael Wheeler's inaugural lecture as Professor of English Literature at the University of Southampton delivered on 28 February 2001. His Chair is linked to his role as Director of Chawton House Library, which takes up three-quarters of his time. His current research focuses upon the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen.

The Millennium Meeting of the Jane Austen Society and the Jane Austen Society of North America, Bermuda, 2-9 May 2000

Elisabeth Rowell

The choice of Bermuda for the meeting was an appropriate mark of the close connection between the islands, the Navy, and Jane Austen. Both her naval brothers served there. Throughout the week in Hamilton, members were constantly aware of Bermuda's important naval associations, visiting places of historical interest and with talks on related subjects, among these on 'Jane Austen and the Navy' by Brian Southam.

Sir Francis Austen (1774-1865), Jane Austen's brother Frank, was appointed Commander-in-Chief North America and West India Station from 1863 with rank of Senior Admiral of the Fleet, his flag in HMS *Vindictive,* having earlier served there including, in 1805, in command of HMS *Canopus* (a name mentioned in *Mansfield Park*). Her brother Charles (1779-1852) went to Bermuda in 1804 to take command of HMS *Indian*, one of several Bermuda sloops built at St George's of the native cedar, a light wood with the useful property of resistance to marine pests. While there, he married Fanny Palmer, daughter of the Attorney General of Bermuda. He became a Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief East India and China Station in 1850. A son of Francis Austen, Herbert Grey Austen, served as Flag-Lieutenant to his father in HMS *Vindictive*, with another son, the Revd George Austen, as chaplain.

An exhibition at the Commissioner's House, in the former Royal Naval Dockyard, coincided with the Society's visit. It was of watercolours by Herbert Grey Austen and by the Flag-Captain, Michael Seymour, of Bermuda, Halifax and the Caribbean, with informative annotations. One reference is to HMS *Trincomalee*, later *Foudrayant*. They are good examples of the well observed topographical sketches in which young officers became proficient. Some paintings are on loan from a great-grandson of Francis Austen.

The siting of the Dockyard on Ireland Island was made possible as a result of extensive naval surveying of the waters within the reef – initially concentrated on the area of St George's and northwards to Murray's Anchorage. At the outbreak of war with France, in 1793, the Assembly at Bermuda had declared the island to be the 'Gibraltar of the West'. Its strategic importance, which had been increasingly recognised on the outbreak of the American War of Independence and was later the scene of much activity in the war of 1812 and then the American Civil War, was vital as a link between Halifax, in Canada, and the West Indies on an actually or potentially hostile coast. This spurred the government into acquiring land to build a fortified dockyard.

The resulting Royal Naval Dockyard, developed from 1809 over half a century, consists of buildings many of which impress by their simple grandeur and

proportions. They are of the very hard local limestone. Building was carried out by British convict labour, accommodated in hulks, and is of a very high standard of workmanship. Typically of Bermuda, large cisterns were excavated for storage of rainwater collected from roofs of buildings covered with tufa slabs rendered waterproof by regular treatment with whitewash. These cisterns are still in use.

On the heavily fortified Keep is situated the Commissioner's House and ranges of fine storehouses. The former, designed in 1820 by Edward Hall, chief architect to the Royal Navy, is unique for the successful experimental use of cast iron – employed much as wood, for floor beams, roof trusses, and the columns supporting the double verandah surrounding the building. Moreover it was exceptionally well designed within, with running hot and cold water and flushing toilets. The storehouses include the gunpowder store. With memories of the disastrous explosion of the magazine on Hen Island, St George's, in 1812 caused by lightning, this building was designed with strong protection against explosion and damage from shelling. Its multiple-layered brick vault was flanked on each side by five vaulted bays; the flat roof, supported on fill above the vault, was of bitumen or asphalt, and the floor was bitumen covered; bronze strip lightning conductors (now removed) on each pilaster led to a central well.

The buildings, of which many have survived the departure of the Navy, have been restored and appropriately adapted as a Maritime Museum, and the splendid South Eastern Storehouses or Clock Tower Building has become a shopping mall, to attract visitors. The well-preserved woodwork, painted cream and brown, has been restored using the correct original colour known as Imperial Brown – rather suggestive of a traditional affinity to Brown Windsor Soup.

A visit was made to the remains of the attractively sited Admiralty House, on Spanish Point across the Great Sound from the Dockyard, the residence of the Commander-in-Chief. It remained in naval use till after the last war, when it was the site of an important communications establishment in the western Atlantic. Nearby are the remains of the floating dock previously at the Dockyard.

Jane Austen was practical and did not write about subjects of which she had little knowledge or experience. Her knowledge of naval life was first hand, through two brothers, their wives and families; and she is particularly notable for her representation of the Navy in domestic settings – in the relationship of the service with family life.

Thus the Navy is seen, both in the novels and in the letters, as 'if possible more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance'; and it plays an unexpected but most valuable role in carrying the interest of the novels out into the wider world.

This is a shortened version of an article published in The Mariner's Mirror: Journal of the Society for Nautical Research, *to the editor of which we are grateful for permission to reprint it.*



The Lime Tree at Steventon *(photo by Joyce Bowen)*

The Lime Tree at Steventon Rectory

Deirdre Le Faye

James Austen was the most introspective and literary-minded of Jane's brothers, and frequently chose verse as the best vehicle for committing his thoughts to paper. Hardly any of his original manuscripts survive, but during the 1830s his son, the Revd James Edward Austen-Leigh (known to his immediate family as Edward, to distinguish him from his father), suffered from some throat complaint which for years prevented him from preaching or reading aloud and inhibited even normal conversation,[1] and during this period of enforced idleness and silence he occupied himself by copying out many of his father's poems into two manuscript volumes. One of these volumes, with a watermark of 1834, descended in the Austen-Leigh family; the other, with a rather different selection of verses, was written out in the following year and became Anna Lefroy's copy;[2] it is hoped that the Jane Austen Society will soon be able to publish the amalgamated contents of the volumes, together with a few other miscellaneous mss, as a complete anthology of James's poetry. In the meantime, it seems worth noting that one very tangible souvenir still survives to link us with James and his family, even though the old Steventon rectory was demolished in the 1820s.

In both of the volumes the following poem, of 113 lines in rhyming couplets, appears: *To Edward, on planting a lime tree on the terrace in the meadow before the house, January 1813.* It begins:

> This tree which we together plant,
> If Heaven a Parent's wishes grant,
> For many a future year shall prove
> A record of our mutual love.
> While you, my boy, at school or college
> Are absent, gaining useful knowledge,
> Oft to this tree shall I repair,
> And in my fancy meet you there ...

James continues musing on his fatherly affection for his happy and intelligent schoolboy son, then aged just fourteen, and looks towards the future.

> Here too I hope, when we are gone,
> This place when other masters own,
> When in the little spireless Fane,
> Just seen above the woody lane,
> I and your Mother are at rest,
> Hither, your cousin's welcome guest
> You'll frequent come, & every time
> Still to this interesting lime
> Your visit will be duly paid ...

and he goes on to envisage that this will make James Edward remember his happy

childhood, riding his pony Sutton in the paddock and playing with his younger sister Caroline in the rectory garden in fine weather or in the barn if it was wet.

James Austen died in 1819, and Henry Austen held the Steventon living for a few years until Edward Knight's son William was old enough to become ordained. The Revd William Knight remained at Steventon for the rest of his life, from 1823 until 1873; his first care was to demolish the damp old rectory where his grandfather and uncles had lived, and to build himself a new one on the top of the hill on the other side of the lane, opposite the site of the old Austen home. It is not known how many times James Edward Austen-Leigh may have visited Steventon during the years of his cousin's incumbency; but when, in the late 1860s, he was planning to write his *Memoir of Jane Austen* he certainly did go back to stay with William, in order to remind himself of the Steventon of his boyhood, when his aunt had been still alive. He wrote to his elder sister, Anna Lefroy, on 8 July 1869, to tell her of this visit: 'All traces of former things are even more obliterated than I had expected. Even the terrace has been levelled, & its site is to be distinguished only by the finer turf on that place ... One Lime planted by our father near that part has become a magnificent tree.'[3]

It has recently been realised that a very large solitary lime tree *(tilia x europaea,* the European or common lime) stands close to the site of the old rectory, and so in all probability is indeed the one that was planted by James and commemorated in his verses. The lime is a long-lived and very hardy tree, the tallest of broad-leafed trees in Britain, and is described in forestry terms as forming a billowing dome to a height of 120 feet. Thanks to the kindness of the owner of the field, this specimen was professionally surveyed in May 2000, and its height calculated as being nearly 125 feet; when it was planted in 1813 it was presumably already a sapling, and therefore is now almost exactly 200 years old. There does not seem to be any information in print as to how long a lime tree can live, but cuttings from it have been taken to grow on elsewhere, so that visual reminders of James Austen's fond paternal gesture will continue to survive.

Notes

1 Mary Augusta Austen-Leigh, *James Edward Austen-Leigh, a Memoir* (privately printed 1911), pp. 58-72.

2 The Austen-Leigh family copy is now deposited in the Hampshire Record Office, accession number 23M93/60/3/2. Anna Lefroy's copy descended in her family for some years, and then at one time belonged to a Miss Helen Simpson, who at an unknown date sold it through Myers & Co., 102 New Bond Street, London, when it was bought by the Jane Austen Memorial Trust; it is now kept at Jane Austen's House, Chawton.

3 JEAL's letter to Anna is in the Hampshire Record Office, 23M93/84/1.

'The new Nursery Man

Jane Hurst

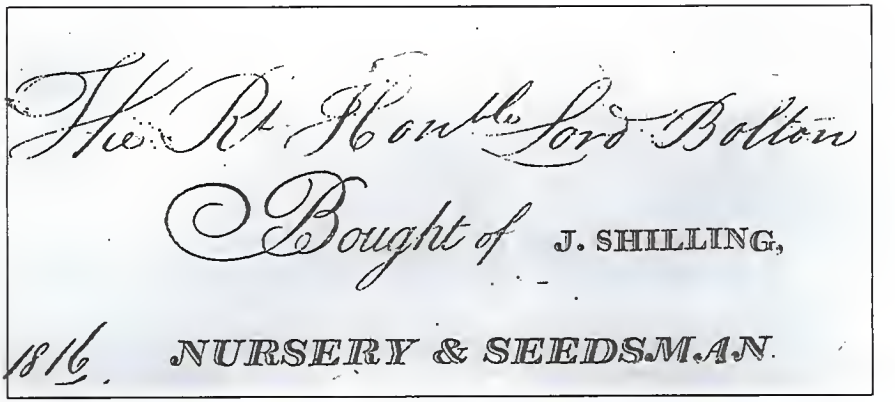
'The new Nursery Man comes this morning, to value the Crops in the Garden.-' wrote Jane Austen to her sister, Cassandra, on Tuesday 14 June 1814 (although she dated the letter 'Tuesday, June 13').[1]

The person that fits this description best is John Shilling, nurseryman and seedsman. John and Elizabeth Shilling had moved to Alton from the Farnham area, Farnham being a market town to the east of Alton, in the county of Surrey. Between 1807 and 1813, six of their children (Mary, Samuel, Martha, Joseph, William and Stephen) had been baptised at Dog Flud Independent Chapel in Farnham.[2] On 22 May 1814, David Shilling, son of John and Elizabeth Shilling, was baptised at the Independent Chapel, Normandy Street, Alton.[3] The Poor Rate account for August 11, 1815, shows that John and his family were living in a property on Crown Hill that is now numbered 15, High Street, Alton.[4] The house is still there and has recently been renovated. On 24 September another son – Charles – was baptised at the Chapel. By late October, the family had moved across the road to 20 High Street. Unfortunately this property has been demolished and a new development is being built there.

On 2 May 1814, Thomas Gunner, a yeoman of Willhall Farm, Alton, insured 'a Hopkiln Brick Built and Tiled situate in a Field in Alton aforesaid and called Kiln Piece'.[6] A year later, he wrote his will and left, amongst other property, 70 acres and hop kilns, etc., in the occupation of himself and Shilling.[7] A note was added that said that 12 acres and a hop kiln had been sold and 'the other is mortgaged to Mr. Trimmer for £1500'. Thomas Gunner died in 1822 and the will was proved in 1823. Kiln Piece lies next to the Old Odiham Road and was given the number 315 in the Alton Tithe Apportionment.[8]

John Shilling certainly had some important customers. The records of the Jervoise family of Herriard contain a wonderful bill for the plants and seeds bought for the estate, from Shilling, between January and July 1816. Many similar crops may have been grown by the Austen family – either at the House or at the Cottage in Chawton.

The year started with early potatoes being delivered. In February there were seeds of early Longpod Beans and Sandwich Beans, Golden Hotspur and Green Rouncival Pease, Egyptian, Golden Coss and Brown Dutch Lettuce, early White, Late Purple, Brimstone and Cape Brocoli, early Dwarf, early York, Red Dutch and Green curled Savoy Cabbage, as well as three kinds of turnip, spinach, three types of onion, cauliflowers, celeriac, six varieties of radishes, carrots, cardoons, salsify, leeks, parsnip, parsley, basil and marjoram. At the end of March, more potatoes were bought, and in April, seeds of cucumbers and a 'Packett of Annual flower Seeds' costing 10s. This must have been quite a large packet as 4oz of carrot seeds only cost 1s. The purchases for May were seeds of Brussel Sprouts, three types of Kail, 15 Squash seeds, and mustard and cress. The total bill came to



Reproduced by kind permission of Hampshire Record Office

over £9. If Shilling produced all, or even most, of the seed himself then he would have needed a large area of land on which to do it.

Later in 1816, John Shilling, nurseryman and seedsman of Alton, sent a bill to Lord Bolton of Hackwood, near Basingstoke, for:-

Quicksett	3.	10	
French Furze		8	
French wheat	1.	8.	6
	5.	6. 6[10]	

The quicksett was used for hedging. Shilling had also supplied the Jervoise estate with '350 strong Hazle' so a nurseryman was expected to supply trees and shrubs as well as garden plants and seeds. From Jane's letter, it seems that Shilling acted as a kind of broker – visiting people's gardens and estates, valuing their surplus crops and then, possibly, arranging for their sale.

On 31 December 1816, the 'Hampshire Stewardship Accounts' for Edward Knight, the brother of Jane Austen, mentioned John Shilling for the first time:

Paid Shilling (Nurseryman) a Bill £2 1s 0d.

Six months later, there was another bill – this time amounting to £10 9s 6d – and £7 11s l0d was due in December 1818.[11]

John must have been very busy and this may account for the delay in baptising the next Shilling baby. John junior was nine months old when he was taken to the Chapel on 5 May 1817.[12] By this time, John senior was paying the Poor Rate for all the land that he and Thomas Gunner shared – showing that John was the main occupier. When Thomas Gunner took out a new insurance policy, it included 'a Hopkiln B'k and Tiled site in Shillings Nursery in Alton'.[13]

In January 1818 Harriet, daughter of John and Elizabeth Shilling, was baptised. The next, and probably last, child, Henry was baptised at Alton on St Valentine's day, 1819. The entry says that the family were 'of Odiham, lately of Alton'. Despite moving, John still kept the business in Alton.[14] He supplied the Chawton Estate with plants, etc. worth £17 15 8d in 1819 and was taxed on his stock in Alton in 1826.

In 1831, there was an auction of land in Alton, including

> Lot 2. A good Twelve-oast Tiled MALT KILN, with Store Rooms and Cottage, and 3r. 20p. of Land adjoining, as now set out, lying at the east end of the Town of Alton, occupied by Mr Gunner and Mr Shilling.
>
> This lot will be sold subject to a right of way, for all purposes, from the turnpike road to lot 3, extending nine feet from the hedge on the north east side.
>
> Lot 3. A Piece of LAND, now divided into two closes, called the Eight Acres, or Bramans Land', containing 6a. 2r. 4p. (more or less) lying above Lot 2.
>
> This lot will be entitled to the right of way reserved from lot 2.
>
> Lot 4. A Close of LAND, adjoining Lots 2 and 3, fronting the turnpike road, called Kiln Close, containing 2a. (more or less) now used as Nursery Ground by Mr Shilling. [15]

By the time Pigot's Directory was produced in 1831-2, John Shilling had become nurseryman and seedsman of 'North Warnborough, Alton and Hartley Row'. Twenty years later, the family were still tending the horticultural needs of the area with 'Joseph and Stephen Shilling, nursery and seedsmen and florists, North Warnborough' being advertised in a Hampshire directory.[16] The business was still flourishing in 1895, as Charles Shilling was said to be a nurseryman and seedsman of 'Fleet, Winchfield & High Street, Hartley Wintney'.[17] Jane Austen's 'new Nursery Man' certainly started a horticultural dynasty that survived in Hampshire long after her death in 1817 and – who knows – local gardens and estates may have in them descendants of her 'Crops in the Garden'.

Notes

1 Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters* (Oxford, 1995), p. 263.
2 International Genealogical Index (IGI).
3 Hampshire Record Office: 31M93/3.
4 Hampshire Record Office: 21M71/PO15.
5 Ibid.
6 Guildhall Library, London: Royal Exchange Assurance, policy no. 281314.
7 Hampshire Record Office: 1823 A35 and 13M65/41.
8 Hampshire Record Office: 1M64/1-2.
9 Hampshire Record Office: 44M69/E13/417.
10 Hampshire Record Office: 4M51/210.
11 Hampshire Record Office: 18M61/BOX/97/209.
12 Hampshire Record Office: 31M93/3.
13 Guildhall Library, London: Royal Exchange Assurance, policy no. 302139.
14 Pigot & Co., *Hampshire Directory,* 1828.
15 *Hampshire Chronicle,* 18 April 1831.
16 Slater's *Directory of Hampshire,* 1852.
17 Kelly's *Directory of Hampshire,* 1895.

Jane Austen and Cricket

Michael Davis

It is known that Jane Austen was keen on cricket. At home at Steventon as a girl, according to David Nokes 'she would far rather play at boys' games with her brothers, than settle to the female repertoire of accomplishments recommended by her drawing-master or music-master.'[1] The favourite game, apparently, was cricket.

She was no doubt speaking for herself when, in the first chapter of *Northanger Abbey*, she describes Catherine Morland as 'greatly preferring cricket not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush.'[2] In a letter to her sister Cassandra from Goodnestone Farm on 27 August 1805 Jane wrote '... we could not begin dinner till six. We were agreeably surprised by Edward Bridges's company to it. He had been, strange to tell, too late for the cricket match, too late at least to play himself, and, not being asked to dine with the players, came home. It is impossible to do justice to the hospitality of his attentions towards me; he made a point of ordering toasted cheese for supper entirely on my account.'[3] This anecdote reveals a casual familiarity with the procedures of a cricket match on the part of Jane and her sister.

When Jane's brother Francis was living at Portsdown Lodge, near Portsmouth, during the long years as an unemployed serving officer, his daughter Catherine recorded their life there and emphasised that the two favourite pastimes in the paddocks were archery and cricket; a cricket field was laid out and she drew a sketch of it.

How were the Austen family so familiar with cricket? There is one obvious connection. At the time when Jane was a young girl, the popularity of cricket had greatly increased and its fame resided especially with the Hambledon club in her native Hampshire. A village team, they became so good that they would play anyone, anywhere, at any time for whatever stakes. They regularly played All-England teams, selected from the best players throughout the rest of England, and beat them. The names of the players, such as Billy Beldham, John Small, Lumpy Stevens, Tom Sueter, Richard Nyren and David Harris, were widely known, and still are today. In their pretty three-cornered hats, dark breeches, snowy vests and silk stockings, they cast an enduring image. The exploits of the men of Hambledon on Broad-Halfpenny Down must have been well known to the family. In 1786, when Jane was 11 years old, Hambledon played a famous match against the men of Kent and won, thus retaining their title as unofficial national champions. Imagine the divided loyalties in the Austen household! We must assume that Jane was a Hampshire supporter.

Early on in the history of the game there emerged a genre of literature devoted to it, which makes cricket unique amongst sports. John Nyren of the Hambledon club set a standard for later writers, poets and commentators with his memoirs, *Cricketers of My Time*. Were any of these early cricket writings amongst the Revd



Cricket at Portsdown Lodge, pencil drawing by Catherine Hubback *(reproduced by kind permission of David Hopkinson Esq.)*

George Austen's five hundred books at Steventon? Nyren recalls the golden days of high feasting and singing on Broad-Halfpenny Down, after the cricket. The matches were promoted by the local aristocrats and gentry, who laid on lavish hospitality for the players. Huge crowds were attracted, in many cases in excess of 20,000, and there were boxes and hospitality tents, and gents' and ladies' toilets, much as you would see at a major game today. The game cut across the social classes, with aristocrats and gentry taking to the field with artisans and rustic labourers. The former would be happy playing under the captaincy of the latter, sometimes their own servants, with proficiency at cricket dictating the new pecking order.

Cricket has always been far more than a game; it has had a broader appeal to those interested in the art of living, especially artists, musicians and writers. As Sir Neville Cardus, the greatest cricket writer of them all, put it, 'The dawn of the game was indeed as fresh as the herald of any summer day on the Hambledon Downs; it is as well to be in at the beginning of things before custom has staled, and before the law of diminishing returns has got to work. It is not sensible to ask doubtfully whether Beldham and Harris and their like would have been great cricketers in the company of Hammond, Bradman and Larwood.'[4] In the fierce engagement which had taken place between Hambledon and Kent, Lumpy Stevens had several times bowled the batsman through the wicket, which at that time consisted of two stumps and a long bail, without disturbing any of them. As a result of this event, a middle stump was introduced as a practical expedient. Cardus joked that this 'was not some show of Trinitarianism, with three stumps pointing heavenward from the earth, especially in view of the large number of the clergy present at any cricket match, on the field and off.' Cricket was a favourite pastime among the clergy of Hampshire.

Women were also playing cricket at this time. There was in the Jane Austen Museum of George Bayntun, Bookbinders, of Bath, and now in my possession, an early sporting print of the Hampshire women playing Surrey in 1811. There is a hospitality marquee, flagged as the 'Jolly Cricketer' and the scorers are notching sticks. This match was played for a wager between the two county committees of 500 guineas, £30,000 in today's money. Cricket, like most other sports, has always been a betting game.

Professor Underdown states in his book[5] that the social acquaintances of the Austens in the north of the county overlapped surprisingly little with the membership of the Hambledon club in the south, although in social terms they were similar. But the evidence in the book suggests that this was not so. For example, the Revd Charles Powlett was the real driving force behind the club throughout the glory years, a period of at least thirty years. He was the illegitimate son of the Duke of Bolton, of Hackwood Park in the north of the county, and the actress Lavinia Fenton, with whom he had fallen hopelessly in love when she had appeared as Polly Peachum in the *Beggar's Opera*. His wife would not co-operate, and Bolton had to wait until 1752 to marry Lavinia, after the Duchess had died. He died himself two years later, without legitimate heirs, and the title went in succession to his younger brother Harry and two of his sons.



Rural Sports or a Cricket Match Extraordinary

On Wednesday October 3rd 1811. A singular cricket match took place at Balls Pond, Newington. The Players on both sides were 22 Women, 11 Hampshire against 11 Surrey. The Match was made between The Amateur Noblemen of the respective Committees for 500 guineas stake [?]. The Performers in the Contest were of all Ages and Sizes. Print by Thomas Rowlandson

This family was well known to the Austens; James Austen was in love with Lady Catherine Powlett, and wrote poems to her, and Jane Austen recalled flirting with Charles Powlett's nephew (also Charles) and denying him a kiss.[6]

The club was in decline by the 1790s, when the centre of gravity of cricket, like most other things, had moved to London. But it continued until its eventual demise in 1825. The final match was on 24 and 25 August 1824, at Hambledon, versus Goodwood. Hambledon were fielding all-gentlemen sides by then, often strengthened by a couple of professionals. It was the decider of a series of three matches, with the score standing at one each. Goodwood appeared to be coasting to victory, but then there was a rousing finish. On this final afternoon, on the last day of their last match, there was a personal performance which ranked high in the traditions of this famous club. Edward Knight of Chawton, one of the most regular members of the team, turned the match on its head with a display of what the Hampshire Chronicle described as 'very superior hitting'. He scored 53 out of a total of 114, and Hambledon won by two wickets.

It was a pity that his Aunt Jane was not able to be there to watch him do it; she had died seven years earlier. Were his father, also Edward Knight, and his grandmother and aunt Cassandra, there? Probably not, but they would soon have heard about it, and would have been proclaiming it to their friends and neighbours.

There is currently a proposal to build houses on the Grey Friar car park, opposite Jane Austen's house in Chawton, which the Society is opposing. Amongst the objections it is stated that 'there has always been a completely open aspect and view across towards the tree line bounding the Lavant stream and the village cricket field'. I spoke to Robert Knight, brother of the Society's President Richard Knight, and until recently an active member of the team, and asked him whether cricket would have been played there in Jane's time. The Chawton club have traced their history back to 1883 in the Records Office at Winchester, but they are not sure how much earlier than that they were playing there. He told me that his father, Edward Knight, was a good player. Clearly, the cricket gene still flows strongly in the Knight (Austen) family.

Notes

1 David Nokes, *Jane Austen: A Life*, (London, 1997), p.82.
2 *Northanger Abbey*, ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford, 3rd edn., 1933), p.13.
3 *The Letters of Jane Austen*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford, 1995) p.100.
4 Neville Cardus, *English Cricket* (London, 1945), pp.15,13.
5 David Underdown, *Start of Play: Cricket and Culture in Eighteenth Century England*, (London, 2000).
6 *Letters*, p.4.

Was Jane Austen a Bonapartist?

Brian Southam

This may seem an odd question to ask. Jane Austen's reputation is firmly in place as a political and ideological conservative, English through and through and unradical to the backbone. On its own, *Emma* confirms her thorough-going Englishness, her attachment to English manners and traditions and the sweet especial English scene, along with her aversion to most things French. We only know of one reference to Bonaparte, a light-hearted suggestion to Cassandra that *Pride and Prejudice* might be padded out with his 'history' so as to 'bring the reader with increased delight to the playfulness & Epigrammatism of the general stile'.[1] But the Bonapartist question is nonetheless real. It is raised by a manuscript in Southampton University Library, a transcription by Jane Austen of Byron's poem known today as 'Napoleon's Farewell'. It was first published, untitled and anonymous, in *The Examiner* for 30 July 1815, and next in Byron's *Poems* (April 1816), now with the title 'Farewell to France'. It seems likely that Jane Austen copied the poem from *The Examiner*, since she gives it a title of her own. Moreover, she follows *The Examiner* text in one small but significant detail, omitting 'still' from line 3 of the third stanza, the word which Byron added to the text for its appearance in *Poems* 1816. Byron's style was readily recognizable and as an admirer of his work she would have faced no difficulty in putting a name to this anonymous poem when it first came out in *The Examiner*.

It is worth saying that *The Examiner*, a radical weekly founded and edited by Leigh Hunt, was opposed to the government's demonising of Napoleon. Instead, *The Examiner* maintained that he was no more and no less guilty of inhumanity than any other war leader and that the British public should be reminded of the political advances he brought to his European conquests as well as of his excesses. *The Examiner*'s opening pages for the issues of 23 and 30 July were given over to the news of Napoleon's surrender and his presence on an English ship in English waters. Along with this news came extensive editorial comment. Given Hunt's literary tastes, political views and friendships – including Byron, whom he regarded as an ally and 'a free spirit' – *The Examiner* was a natural home for Byron's poem.

Unlike his 'Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte' (published in April 1814), 'Farewell to France' is not one of Byron's remembered poems. It belongs to his sentimental-declamatory vein. Napoleon's heroic posture is conveyed in resounding but monotonous verse. But the poem had a particular impact in the summer of 1815. After Waterloo, Napoleon had fled first to Paris and then South West Rochefort, where two frigates waited to take him to America. Changing his mind, however, under a flag of truce, he had himself rowed out to a British man-of-war, the *Bellerophon*, to place himself, as he put it, 'under the protection of British Law'.[2] On 24 July, the *Bellerophon* arrived off the English coast and tourists flocked out to see the fallen Emperor. In Tor Bay and Plymouth Sound, for the next two weeks until his departure for St Helena, Napoleon's appearances on the ship's

deck provided the main news of the day for the London and provincial papers. So Byron's dramatic monologue mythologises Napoleon at a precise moment of history – the manuscript is dated 25 July. It portrays a leader solitary and defeated, yet charismatic, unbroken and ready to return, an arch-Romantic figure of grandeur, glamour and pathos.

Whatever it was about the poem that impressed Jane Austen, she was at pains to copy it out in her finest copper-plate hand – a rare occurrence, since we know of only four other occasions when she copied out other people's verse. Moreover, whether she was copying *The Examiner* or *Poems* (1816), not content with making a straight transcription, she introduced changes of her own. Some of these are insignificant, merely matters of capitalization and punctuation. Others signal a degree of involvement with the poem, effecting a purposeful, if only slight alteration to its course: a softening, in line 1, of Byron's 'gloom' to 'bloom'; in lines 2 and 4, the reversal of 'fame' and 'name'; in line 17 'Liberty' de-democratised into 'Victory'; and in lines 21-22 more certainty is given to Napoleon's return as saviour of his people.

These changes are few and marginal. In its essentials Byron's original meaning remains intact. It is certainly not a case of 'appropriation', of Jane Austen taking over the poem and using it for statement of her own. So the question remains - what, in the first place, captured her interest? To that, it is safe to say we shall never find the answer. Cassandra is the person with whom Jane Austen is most likely to have discussed either Napoleon or Byron's poem, and their surviving correspondence provides no clue whatsoever – the only Austen family reference to Napoleon to have come to light so far is Fanny Knight's diary entry for 8 April 1814: 'glorious news of Buonaparte vanquished and dethroned' (recorded by Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen : A Life* [1997], p.242).

Short of pure speculation, the best we can do towards figuring out a possible answer is to take someone of Jane Austen's generation, not one of the notable literary figures whose views on Napoleon are well-documented, but someone as little known as Jane Austen was in her own lifetime, and who shared something of her critical temper, her detachment, her wit and independence of mind. Few women meet this description. But among those who come near to it is Elizabeth Ham, a minor novelist, born in 1783, eight years later than Jane Austen. Her reaction to Napoleon, while not untypical of the time, is quite individual and is probably the closest we can get in trying to reconstruct some approximation of Jane Austen's own attitude – a risky enterprise, but at least worth the attempt.

To this end, I have chosen four passages from her memoir written in 1849-52. The first extract reports a conversation Elizabeth (then aged 15) overheard between her mother and an officer in the Stafford Militia in 1798: this was following the Battle of the Nile, which took place on 1 August:

> The Guard house was not far from ours, and our windows commanded a view of it, and the Officer on duty, if he had ever so slight an acquaintance, was glad to avail himself of it to lounge away an hour or two. I took my work and sat down, listening to their conversation. I think it must have been just the time when the first news of the Battle of the Nile (1798) reached England, and the

report was that General Bonaparte was taken. To my great astonishment, this Officer seemed to be sorry for him, saying that he was the greatest General of the day, and told how, though so young, he had worked his own way to power, adding that he, the Officer, was in Corsica when the mob burnt the house of his father, and that had he known what the son would turn out to be, he would have striven hard to have saved that house.

To all this I listened in perfect astonishment. I had been taught by all I heard around me that it was a cardinal sin not to hate the French, and that Bonaparte was to be held in most particular detestation in proportion to his power to do mischief – and here was a British Officer praising him!

From that time my mind was awakened to judge for itself. It was soon found that the report of his being taken was false, and from that time I watched the career of Napoleon with the deepest interest. He was accused of cowardice in running away from his troops. But I saw how these troops idolized him, and could that be? Here was a young man, not yet thirty, stopping single-handed a second reign of Terror. Staving off famine from the Parisians, and bringing order out of anarchy. The calumnies invented to blacken his character were so utterly unbelievable that they had the effect of making me reject every story that was told to his disadvantage. In one word, he became my Hero, and it was quite a passion with me. He was made First Consul, and some one lent me a medal bearing his likeness that had somehow found its way to England. I took the impression with Isinglass dissolved in spirits of wine, and a beautiful face it was, and put it into a Locket that it just fitted, with a little round curl of my little brother James's hair to consecrate it.[3]

This is the Jane Austen of 'sense' and 'sensibility', a mixture of independent judgement and teenage hero-worship, combining the sentimentality of Marianne Dashwood with the cool reflection of her sister Elinor.

Five years later, in 1804, Elizabeth Ham reports on the country's preparedness to meet the threat of invasion:

A threatened invasion now roused the energies of all England. Corps of Volunteers both Yeomanry and Infantry were formed all over the Kingdom, and a *levée en masse* was proposed. Beacons were built up on every eminence and every precaution that could be imagined taken against sudden alarm.

My brother John held a Captain's commission in the Guernsey Militia, my brother Tom the same rank in a Company of volunteers. My Uncle William was first Cornet, then Lieutenant in the Somerset Yeomanry. Whilst my Father and my numerous Uncles contented themselves as privates in their several Corps.

Whilst this 'Scarlet Fever' was raging I paid a visit to Somersetshire and thought Tom looked remarkably well in his regimentals, tho' his brother Officers did not wear theirs, certainly, 'as if to the manner born'.

I took great pains to teach Tom how to place his hat on his head. Those ugly cocked hats! If they were not well poised they were frightful. These undisciplined youths always wore them bobbing down their backs.

Lines of Lord Byron, in the Character of Buonaparte.

1.

Farewell to the Land, where the bloom of my glory
Arose, & o'ershadowed the Earth with her fame,
She abandons me now, but the page of her story
The brightest or blackest is filled with my name.
I have warred with a World, which vanquish'd me only
When the meteor of Conquest allured me too far,
I have coped with the Nations which dread me thus lonely
The last single Captive, to Millions in war

2.

Farewell to thee France! when thy Diadem crown'd me
I made thee the gem & the wonder of Earth,
Thy weakness decrees, I should leave, as I found thee
Decay'd in thy glory and sunk in thy worth.
O! for the veteran hearts which were wasted
In strife with the Storm, when their battles were won,
Then the Eagle whose gaze in that moment was blasted
Had still soared with eyes fix'd on Victory's sun.

3.

Farewell to thee France! but when Victory rallies
Once more in thy Regions, remember me then;
The Violet grows in the depths of thy Vallies,
Tho' wither'd — thy tears will unfold it again.
Once more I may vanquish the foes that surround us,
Once more shall thy heart-leap awake to my voice.
There are Links that must break in the Chain that has bound us,
Then turn thee, & call on the Chief of thy Choice.

MS 8 *(reproduced by courtesy of the University of Southampton Library)*

ORIGINAL POETRY

We scarcely need remind our readers, that there are points in the following spirited Lines, with which our opinions do not accord; and indeed the Author himself has told us, that he rather adapted them to what may be considered as the speaker's feelings, than his own.

1.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my glory
Arose and o'ershadowed the earth with her name;–
She abandons me now, –but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is filled with my fame.
I have warred with a world which vanquished me only
When the meteor of Conquest allured me too far;–
I have coped with the Nations which dread me thus lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war!

2.

Farewell to thee, France –when thy diadem crowned me
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,–
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won,–
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soared with eyes fixed on Victory's Sun!

3.

Farewell to thee, France –but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then–
The Violet grows in the depth of thy vallies,
Though withered, thy tears will unfold it again–
Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice–
There are links which must break in the chain that has bound us,
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

Byron's 'Farewell to France' as first printed, untitled and unattributed, in *The Examiner*, 30 July 1815.

On this occasion I paid Susan Pester rather a long visit. She insisted on introducing to my particular notice a great Tom-cat called Bonaparte, whilst she affected to patronize another called John Bull.

It was then thought almost monstrous that anyone could admire a single act of Napoleon's and as the talk of the *Empire* was then rife, and the expected divorce hinted at, they bestowed on me the *soubriquet* of 'the Empress'. They were a merry set, and I enjoyed my visit greatly, notwithstanding we slept in a dark wainscoted room ornamented with the scalps of Indians.[4]

('Empress': having crowned himself Emperor on 18 May 1804, Napoleon placed the crown on the head of his wife Josephine). With Francis and Charles in the Navy, and Henry an ex-Militia officer, and many relations and friends of the family in the Volunteers, the Austens, like the Hams, were an actively patriotic family.

This third extract dates from around 1807:

Napoleon was still my hero, much to my family's annoyance. One evening, my Mother thought to enlist Capt. Napier on her side. 'Do you know,' said she to him, 'that Bessy won't believe a word against Bonaparte. She denies that he could have ordered his own wounded to be poisoned.' 'Is that true?' said he, turning to me. 'Is it reasonable to suppose,' I replied, 'that he would be such an object of devotion and love to his Army, if he could be guilty of such cruelty to them at such a time?' He seized both my hands and shook them heartily. 'I honor you,' he exclaimed. 'I honor you from my heart!' I shall never forget my poor Mother's look of blank amazement. He told me that his Father was present when the subject was first mentioned, by, I think, a French Officer in Egypt. That everyone understood it as a hoax, except the Hoaxee, a young English Officer. But Napoleon himself has since admitted that the question was discussed with his Physician as to the humanity of thus disposing of those that could not be removed, those who were actually dying, rather than let them fall into the hands of the Turks. I found that he was as great an admirer of the Hero as I was.[5]

The final passage comes in early August 1815, on the eve of Napoleon's departure for St Helena, for which he had been transferred from the *Bellerophon* to the *Northumberland*. It was rumoured that he was to be brought to London, having petitioned the Prince Regent to be allowed to stay in England.

I was on a visit to Compton at the time Napoleon was lying off Plymouth in the *Northumberland*, I think it was, after his surrender. I still felt powerfully interested in his fate, which was not yet decided. A half pay officer with his wife and children had taken a cottage adjoining my aunt's. One evening he brought home the news that Bonaparte was certainly to pass through Ilchester on the morrow, and to change horses there on his way to London. My young cousins were all agog to go and see him. My aunt for some reason of her own, wished to get rid of us all, and strongly insisted on our going. I felt it was a sort of fool's errand, to walk eight miles there and eight back for such a chance; and yet the bare chance of seeing him was sufficient to prevent my making much

> opposition. It was all across the country , and neither of us knew the way, but we contrived to find it, and arrived very much tired about twelve o'clock at Sam Pester's house. He was absent, but his brother Philip was there attending to the business for him. We were ashamed to tell our errand, or to make any inquiries. Mrs Pester very hospitably invited us to share their early dinner. In the course of conversation Philip said 'By the bye, 'twas said that Bonaparte was to come through the town'. And then with a wicked smile 'Oh I know now what brought you here'. I was terribly provoked, but there was nothing for it but to join in the laugh.[6]

'I still felt powerfully interested in his fate'. Is it pushing it too far to suppose that Jane Austen's attitude towards Napoleon was not unlike Elizabeth Ham's? If so, we can leave her words to serve as a simple yet sufficient explanation, in the absence of any other, for the impulse that moved Jane Austen to copy out Byron's poem.

But there is a further complicating circumstance. At the time of Waterloo, Southey held the post of Poet Laureate. Feeling, as he wrote 'in some degree bound to celebrate the greatest victory in British history, I persuaded myself that if any person had a valid cause or pretext for visiting the field of Waterloo' – then rapidly becoming a major tourist attraction and a favoured spot for sightseers – 'it was the Poet Laureate.'[7] So in September 1815, Southey dutifully set out to pay his visit. Stopping at Brussels on the way, in the 'waggon-loads of wounded and convalescent soldiers' he reported seeing the 'dreadful marks of war'; and, arriving at Waterloo itself, he found 'the field of battle ... still strewn with the vestiges of slaughter'.[8] What came out of this was a lengthy poem, *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, published in 1816. As more than one reviewer complained, the poet's eye was not so much upon the 'horrors' and 'glories' of the Battle but upon himself ('for he is a prodigious egotist', remarked an anonymous critic in the *Augustan Review*), and upon his family, 'his fellow-travellers', 'and all who hate Buonaparte with a hearty hatred' – this not at all calculated to 'impress ... foreigners' with 'the taste and genius of the nation – especially as he is foolish enough to call upon the world to view him as the bard of Britain, acting *ex officio, et pro bono publico*.'[9]

Early in 1817, Mrs Austen and her two daughters were reading Southey's poem at Chawton Cottage. It was received 'generally with much approbation', Jane wrote to Alethea Bigg: 'parts of it suit me better than much that he has written before. The opening – the *Proem* I beleive he calls it – is very beautiful'.[10] It was in the *Proem* that Southey wrote lovingly of his children and the joys of childhood; not without a tragic irony, for the theme, as it turned out, was to be poignantly personal: in April 1816 Southey's (then) only son died at the age of nine. This was known to the Austens at Chawton, since one of Jane's oldest friends, Catherine Bigg, the sister of her correspondent, Alethea, was married to Southey's uncle, the Revd Herbert Hill, who held an important place in Southey's life. Having paid for the poet's education at Westminster and Oxford, Mr Hill was regarded by Southey with great affection – 'always the man of letters', he called him.[11] Jane Austen had kept in touch with Catherine Hill, staying with her as recently as 1814, and no doubt it was this connection which gave the Austens a special reason for keeping up with

Southey's latest work.

With Napoleon safely out of the way, amongst writers and political commentators the prevailing mood was one of relief, and pity too, for the prisoner now held secure on a remote and rocky island, as St Helena was represented, his political existence at an end and his life so circumscribed. But this was a sympathetic note not shared by Southey. Twenty years before, as one of the Wordsworth-Coleridge circle, Southey's veneration was for Napoleon the Liberator and bringer of peace, the shaper of Europe's destiny. But Southey turned Tory. His patriotic *Life of Nelson* (1813) reversed the image. The Emperor Napoleon was a blood-stained tyrant, 'his soul ... incarnadined ... with a deeper dye than that of the purple for which he committed them; – those acts of perfidy, midnight murder, usurpation, and remorseless tyranny, which have consigned his name to universal execration, now and forever.'[12]

As Poet Laureate, Southey found a further platform of authority. His celebratory Ode for the New Year 1814, a 'Carmen Triumphale', allowed him the space to rant at length. France stood 'Disgraced ... to all succeeding times' and 'Vengeance' called for Napoleon's 'Death' – a call sent out despite warning noises from the Ministry.[13] With an eye to the post-war settlement, a kid-glove approach to Napoleon and the French was the official order of the day.

The Poet's Pilgrimage provided Southey with yet another opportunity to indulge his unforgiving stance and to congratulate himself on his consistent antagonism. Silently denying his Radical days of the 1790s, he wrote now of his own 'faith unshaken from the first' against the 'Tyrant', a 'Man of Blood ... Like Satan rising from the sulphurous flood.'[14] Southey was relentless. The Allies were at fault, mercy their weakness: 'Ye had him – and ye did not strike the blow! ... Black as he is with blood ye let him live! O wherefore have ye spared his head accurst!'[15] Stanza after stanza of vengeful ferocity, weary to the modern ear. But the family circle at Chawton Cottage listened to each other's reading of this stuff 'generally with much approbation' – and we are left wondering just what had been in Jane Austen's mind when she copied out Byron's poem.

Notes

1 Letter to Cassandra Austen, 4 February 1813, *Jane Austen's Letters* (1995), ed. Deirdre Le Faye, p. 203.
2 Letter to the Prince Regent, written from Rochefort 13 July 1815, *Napoleon's Letters*, (1934), ed. J.M. Thompson, p.309.
3 *Elizabeth Ham by Herself 1783-1820* (1945), ed. Eric Gillett, pp.43-44.
4 Ibid., p.62.
5 Ibid., pp.102-3.
6 Ibid., p.194.
7 Simon Bainbridge, *Napoleon and English Romanticism* (1995), p.156, quoting Southey's *Journal of a Tour in the Netherlands in the Autumn of 1815* (1816).

8 Letter to Mary Barker, from Brussels, 1 October 1815, *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey*, ed. John Wood Warter (1856), ii.429; Letter to John May, from Liege, 6 October 1815 (*Letters of Robert Southey* (1912), ed. Maurice H. Fitzgerald, p.248.
9 Unsigned review, *Augustan Review* (July 1816), iii. 45-46, reprinted in *Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage* (1972), ed. Lionel Madden, pp.208-09.
10 Letter to Alethea Bigg, 24 January 1817, *Letters* (1995), pp.327-28.
11 Quoted in Jack Simmons, *Southey* (1945), p. 90.
12 Robert Southey, *Life of Nelson* (1813), p.108.
13 'Carmen Triumphale For the Commencement of the Year 1814'. The ferocity of the original version was somewhat tempered and the material Southey removed, with the examples quoted in my text, was incorporated into a new and unacknowledged poem, 'Ode Written during the Negociations with Buonaparte', published in *The Courier*, 3 February 1814 and *The Times*, 21 April 1814.
14 *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* (1816), Pt I, i. stanzas 4,5.
15 Ibid., Pt I, iv. stanzas 6,7.

The Ball at Basingstoke

Deirdre Le Faye

I send you here a list of all
The company who graced the Ball
Last Thursday night at Basingstoke;
There were but six & thirty folk,
Although the evening was so fine ...

and the versifier, Mrs George Austen, continued for another forty lines or so of cheerful doggerel, listing those members of the Hampshire gentry who had driven in from the surrounding countryside to attend one of the winter assembly balls held at the Town Hall in Basingstoke. There were Mr and Mrs William John Chute of The Vyne at Sherborne St John; Mr and Mrs Michael Hicks from Netheravon, Wilts, who were then visiting their cousins the Wither Bramstons of Oakley Hall, and so came with Mrs Bramston, her eccentric sister-in-law Miss Augusta Bramston ('Had she been absent who'd have missed her?') and Mrs Bramston's guest Miss Anne Woodward from Bath; Alethea and Harriet Blackstone, cousins of the Bigg-Wither family of Manydown; Mr and Mrs John Clarke of Worting, with their friends Mr and Mrs George Hoar, also of Worting; the Revd I.P. George Lefroy of Ashe, with his wife Madam Lefroy and their daughter Jemima Lucy, the latter being squired by her admirer the Revd Henry Rice (they were married in the summer of 1801); Sir Alexander Grant, Bt., of Malshanger, and his kinsman Sir George Colebrooke, Bt.; Mrs and Miss Eyre, the wife and daughter of the Revd John Eyre, rector of Sherfield on Loddon; the matriarchal Mrs Terry of Dummer, with a son and a daughter from her thirteen-strong family; the Revd Isaac Williamson, rector of Eastrop and Master of the Basingstoke Grammar School, with his wife Mary; the Revd Charles Powlett, rector of Winslade, with his two kinsmen/pupils – Barton Wallop and Mr Townshend; the Revd William Hasker, curate of Baughurst; Mr Edward Lane of Worting; the Revd John Calland, rector of Bentworth; two Misses Davies, perhaps sisters of the Revd John Davies who was born in Basingstoke in 1762; and the 'two friends', as Mrs Austen phrased it with teasing anonymity, who had provided her with all this information. In later years the manuscript came into the hands of Mrs Austen's grand-daughter Anna Lefroy, who copied it out into her volume of notes on family history, and added at the end the comment: 'Sent by Mrs. Austen to one of her Daughters staying from home.'[1]

Anna did not give a title to the poem, but dated it quite clearly as 'Steventon 1794', and this date was given when the verses were first published by the Austen-Leigh family in 1939,[2] and by myself when I quoted the verse in 1989 and suggested that the 'two friends' were Cassandra escorted by Henry.[3] However, in recent years the composition of the guest-list was studied more closely when publication was once again planned, and this brought to light the fact that Anna Lefroy was wrong in dating it to 1794. Apart from the 36 people who *did* attend, Mrs Austen stresses it was unfortunate that Lord Dorchester and his family, together with Mr Charles

Shaw-Lefevre, were *not* able to come to the ball owing to a prior engagement to dine together; and in 1794 the Dorchesters were not in Hampshire but in Canada, where Lord Dorchester was Governor of Quebec until 1796.[4]

It is therefore necessary to reconsider the correct date of the ball; and the guest-list, plus other contemporary documentary evidence, enables it now to be dated with reasonable certainty to Thursday 7 November 1799, as follows:

The Dorchesters did not take up residence at Kempshott Park, near Basingstoke, until mid-June 1797, immediately after the marriage on 9 June of their son Christopher Carleton to Miss Priscilla Belford; and following their arrival in Hampshire they soon made the acquaintance of the Bramstons and the Chutes.[5] As the Basingstoke assemblies were held monthly from October to March, this means that the earliest occasion upon which the Dorchesters *might* have attended a ball would have been October 1797. The *last* date possible would have been the ball in March 1800, because one of the other guests named by Mrs Austen, the Revd John Calland, who so nervously clutched his hat, died on 20 September 1800.

Other reference points for precise dates of the balls can be found in the diaries of Mrs Chute, which luckily survive for the four years in question, 1797-1800.[6] Mr and Mrs Chute sometimes went to London in the spring, but if they were at home in Hampshire they normally attended about three of the Basingstoke balls every winter, and Mrs Chute notes these occasions in her diaries; she does not give complete lists of the dancers but usually mentions which members of her family accompanied her, the more senior of the other guests, and which gentlemen she danced with. Between October 1797 and March 1800 the Chutes went to Basingstoke nine times; but it is only on Thursday 7 November 1799 that the names Mrs Chute records tally with some of those given by Mrs Austen. The Chutes dined beforehand with the Clarkes and Hoars, and Mrs Chute then mentions the Bramstons, Hickses, Blackstones, Sir Alexander Grant and Sir George Colebrooke as being present at the ball, which she confirms was 'thinly attended'.

Unfortunately, none of Jane Austen's letters survive between 19 June 1799 and 25 October 1800, so it cannot be known which two members of the Austen family went to Basingstoke and reported back the proceedings to Mrs Austen. Frank and Charles were both away at sea, and Henry was with his militia regiment in Ireland, so perhaps it was James and his wife Mary Lloyd who attended the ball, or possibly James took whichever of his sisters it was who stayed at home while the other was away on a visit. Mary Lloyd is known to have kept diaries, but all those before 1810 were apparently lost or destroyed during the twentieth century, so final confirmation of the Austen family's involvement is still lacking. Why Anna should have misdated the manuscript is likewise unknown – perhaps the last figure was blotted or scribbled, or perhaps in later years Mrs Austen herself may have forgotten precisely when she wrote it, and so misinformed Anna accordingly.

Notes

1 A quarto volume bound in red leather and now known as the Lefroy MS.

2 Emma Austen-Leigh, *Jane Austen and Bath* (1939), pp. 48-49; as the poem deals with Hampshire residents and has nothing at all to do with Bath, it seems rather illogical that it should be given as an 'Appendix' in this booklet rather than appearing in the same authoress's *Jane Austen and Steventon* (1937).

3 Deirdre Le Faye, *Jane Austen, A Family Record* (1989), pp. 79-80.

4 David Selwyn, ed., *Jane Austen: Collected Poems and Verse of the Austen Family* (1996), pp. 29-30, 72, 92-95.

5 Unpublished letter from Mrs Bramston to her friend Mrs Hicks – Hampshire Record Office, 20M64/17; Mrs Chute's diary for 1797, under 22 June.

6 Mrs Chute's diaries are in the Hampshire Record Office, accession numbers 23M93/70/1/5,/6,/7 and /8.



Charles Thomas Haden. English School, 19th cent. Oil on canvas(?)
(reproduced by kind permission of Mrs P. Heseltine)

More about Mr Haden

Judith Marshall

Jane Austen's letters show that Charles Thomas Haden (1786-1824), 'the apothecary from the corner of Sloane Street', attended her brother Henry Austen who was ill in the autumn of 1815, and that Jane Austen and her niece Fanny Knight were staying with Henry at Hans Place.[1]

Jane Austen wrote to her sister Cassandra that as a medical man Mr Haden was 'clever' and 'attentive' and that on evening visits he 'brought good Manners & clever conversation', that he believed that 'a person *not* musical is fit for every sort of wickedness' and 'we really grow so fond of Mr Haden that I do not know what to expect'. He dined at Hans Place several times and talked 'uninterruptedly' to Jane Austen's niece, Fanny. To Cassandra's evident warning that an apothecary was an unsuitable admirer for Miss Knight of Godmersham Park, Jane Austen replied:

'You call him an Apothecary; he is no Apothecary, he has never been an Apothecary, there is not an Apothecary in this Neighbourhood – the only inconvenience of the situation perhaps, but so it is – we have not a medical Man within reach – he is a Haden, nothing but a Haden, a sort of wonderful nondescript Creature on two legs, something between a Man & an Angel – but without the least spice of an Apothecary. – He is perhaps the only Person *not* an Apothecary hereabouts.'

This well-known repartee, with its echoes of Sheridan, is a sign of Jane Austen's perceptiveness. Charles Haden was to rise in his profession.[2] He began to study medicine at the age of seventeen, and had come to London in 1814, a year before he met Jane Austen. Eventually he became one of the surgeons of the Chelsea and Brompton Dispensary, 'a trust which he fulfilled most ably and with unwearied assiduity'. He devoted five successive winters to study in the 'best schools of medical and surgical instruction' in London, and subsequently obtained the diploma of MD from one of the northern universities (possibly Edinburgh, where he had spent two years). He originally came from Derbyshire, where his father had been a surgeon and physician before him. He became a member of the Medical and Chirurgical Society of London, and filled the office of Vice-President of the Society of Associated General Practitioners of Medicine and Surgery in England and Wales. He was Editor of *The Medical Intelligencer* (1820-23), and he wrote a Journal of Popular Medicine which 'has been allowed to contain most valuable observations on the Diseases of Children'. Charles Haden recommended, well ahead of his time, opening the windows and having plenty of fresh air. He was also one of the first medical men in England to use Laennec's stethoscope as a help to accurate diagnosis, afterwards generally adopted. He wrote other medical articles and planned a system of zoology. He also wrote an essay on 'The best mode of improving the English Language and on the principles of Punctuation'.

Charles Haden married at about the time Jane Austen became ill, in 1816. His wife, Emma, was the daughter of Samuel Harrison, a well-known tenor singer, and Ann Cantelo, an equally well-known soprano, and pupil of Johann Christian Bach and his wife. The Hadens had four children. Of the two sons, Francis Seymour (known as Seymour) was also a doctor, and also lived at 62 Sloane Street. He was a talented etcher, and founded the Society of Painter-Etchers, and was knighted in 1894. Seymour married the older half-sister of Whistler, who lived with them when he first came to London – later they were to have a famous quarrel. Of the Haden daughters, Emma married a Lyons silk merchant (see below) and Rosamund, the younger, born in 1820, married John Callcott Horsley, the artist, as his second wife in 1854. They had seven children, one of whom, Victor, himself became a noted medical man and received a knighthood.

Charles Haden's musical talents were widely recognised, and 'his skill seemed rather to be that of a professor than of an amateur'. It was said that 'few concerts could afford a higher treat than the half hour he was accustomed to give up to this delightful amusement, to accompany Mrs Haden, whose taste and skill were fully equal to his own'. His character was equally highly regarded: it is on record that in his private life Mr Haden was cheerful, amiable and sincere: he knew how

to appreciate and to practise the giving up of pleasure for duty. Also 'as a son, brother, husband, father or friend his conduct claimed esteem and might serve as an example worthy of imitation. It may truly be said of him that he was one who valued the reciprocal interchange of kindness in private much more than the too strong expression of it in public.'

Charles Haden died in 1824 at the young age of 38, after three years of ill-health from tuberculosis. He diagnosed his own condition and wrote in a letter of April 1823 that 'from my emaciation, pallor and other symptoms I fear the worst; but never mind, I am prepared for that worst and only regret leaving the many friends I possess, and the fine field for doing good, which the present state of society opens to every one who wishes well to his fellow creatures.' He went to the Mediterranean for his health, and died suddenly at sea near Malta on 11 January 1824, and is buried in the Protestant burial ground near the Quarantine Harbour in Malta. His wife and children were 'but slenderly provided for' and were befriended by many well-wishers. Interestingly, the house at 62 Sloane Street avoided the refacing in red terracotta that took place in the region of Sloane Street during the next century (nicknamed 'Pont Street Dutch' as a style by Osbert Lancaster), and until the 1950s it kept its medical connections, finally becoming a dental practice. The house was pulled down in the 1960s, when the present Danish Embassy was built, of which the site forms a part.

After Charles Haden died the family were fairly hard up and Mrs Haden and the children went to Boulogne for a time where living was much cheaper than in England. The eldest daughter, Emma, married her Lyons silk merchant, known in the family as Uncle Bergeron, and the portrait of Charles must have been given to her after her mother's death because the copy, reproduced here, is a photograph in its original frame, probably of late 19th century date, and on the mount of the photograph is printed 'G.L. Allot, Lyon, 3 pl. Meissonier'. As far as is known Emma and Uncle Bergeron had no children and what became of the portrait is not known. It seems the photograph was sent by Emma to her sister Rosamund Horsley. The portrait is of the English School, date and artist unknown. The photograph is reproduced here with the permission of Charles Haden's great-great-granddaughter, Mrs P. Heseltine.

In a list of 'Opinions of *Emma*' drawn up by Jane Austen, Mr Haden features as '*quite* delighted with it. Admired the character of Emma.' This seems to be the last glimpse of him in connection with Jane Austen. But is it? It seems very possible that there is another reference in a letter Jane Austen wrote right at the end of her life, when she was very ill indeed, to Anne Sharp, who had been a governess to the Knight children at Godmersham and had become a close friend. Miss Sharp had gone to Yorkshire to another post as governess. Jane Austen called her 'my dearest Anne', and wrote of 'getting well again', but in the expressions of love and gratitude to her family there is a tenderness that implies knowledge of her situation – she was to die two months later. Anne Sharp was a friend outside the family, and so Jane Austen was more likely to give expression to her real thoughts and wishes, with no fear of causing worry to her relations. She wrote of the apothecary at Alton

not being able to cope with her symptoms, and calling in advice from Winchester, and added: 'The consequence is, that instead of going to Town to put myself into the hands of some Physician as I sh[d] otherwise have done, I am going to Winchester instead'. It seems possible that in her extreme illness she was remembering as 'some Physician' that clever and attentive young man, who was without the least spice of an Apothecary, and a 'sort of wonderful Creature on two legs, something between a Man & an Angel' who had been such a support during Henry's illness in London two years before.

Notes

1 Information from *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford), 1995.

2 Information on C.T. Haden is from Mrs P. Heseltine, and also from *A Biographical Notice of C.T. Haden* by Thomas Alcock, who edited and published posthumously C.T. Haden's *Practical Observations on Children.*
See also Winifred Watson, 'The Austens' London Doctor', *Report* for 1961; T.A.B. Corley, 'The Shocking History of Gowland's Lotion', *Report* for 1999.

The Austens and the family of J.M.W. Turner

Selby Whittingham

Few would hold that Jane Austen and J.M.W. Turner had much in common beyond the fact that they were born in the same year. Mere contemporaneity is, as the Tate Gallery has now decided, not the only determinant of an artist's context. Certainly one would not think of author and artist as coming from related social backgrounds. However, the decision to erect in 2000 a plaque to Jane's father at Tonbridge School, where he was Second Master 1754-7, draws attention to a link which has hitherto been overlooked. For in Tonbridge church, besides various Austen memorials there is also one to Turner's uncle, Henry Harpur, who was vicar of Tonbridge 1756-90.

Harpur and George Austen were born in the same year, 1731, and both were Johnians, the first at Cambridge and the second at Oxford. In 1755 Harpur married Sarah Marshall, the eldest sister of Turner's mother, who ended her days in the Bethlem Hospital. Her fate helps explain why so little has been recorded about the family in the biographies of Turner.[1]

Harpur's father had been a lawyer and steward with clients and employers who included the 2nd Viscount Vane, whose wife published her scandalous memoirs in Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*. Vane was the patron of the large and desirable living of Tonbridge, which then included Tunbridge Wells. His seat, Fairlawne, was a few miles to the north in the parish of Shipbourne, where the Revd Henry Austen was vicar 1747-54, retiring after 1780 to Tonbridge, where the Revd Henry Harpur died in 1790. Henry Austen's cousin, Jane's father, was perpetual curate of Shipbourne 1754-7. The cousins' respective fathers had been an apothecary and surgeon at Tonbridge. The Harpurs were newcomers in the area, though they made up for that by Harpur's sister marrying John I'Anson of Little Bounds, Southborough. I'Anson became the last baronet of that name and took Harpur's eldest son as partner in his law practice at Westminster. The lengthy I'Anson monument is next to Harpur's in Tonbridge church.

Another parishioner was William Woodgate – he and the Revd Henry Austen married sisters – of Somerhill, the mansion which overlooks the town and which Turner painted in 1811. Unlike Constable (with whom the Tate Gallery juxtaposes Turner, despite their fundamental differences), Turner was quite a regular painter of country houses and enjoyed country house life, staying with artistic patrons such as Walter Fawkes at Farnley Hall, Sir John Leicester at Tabley House and the Earl of Egremont at Petworth House. Happily each of these houses survives and retains some Turners.

The papers of the Woodgates, now in the Kent Record Office, were used by the family's historians and show us a world in which the Austens might have felt at home. Their main artistic interest was in music, and so it is possible that they might have welcomed Turner's mistress, c. 1800-13, the widow of the musician John Danby, who had been a leading member of the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch



Rochester, Kent, c.1795 by J.M.W. Turner. Watercolour.
(© Manchester City Art Galleries).

Club, a society which still survives. At any rate Turner's first daughter by Sarah Danby was baptised in 1801 by a Woodgate cousin, who inherited the baronetcy and house of the Ashburnhams near Hastings (where they continue today).

The Harpurs' youngest daughter (and Turner's first cousin) had in 1796 married Thomas Mercer of Green Trees, a house and estate then in the parish of Hadlow but now swallowed up by Tonbridge. He had inherited these with a small fortune from his father, a very successful hop grower. Like the Austens, the Mercers were yeoman who came from Horsmonden, where they seem to have lived at Hazel Street, a farm near Sprivers (now a National Trust property). The Austens had two houses at Horsmonden, Broadford and Grovehurst. The second of these was occupied by Thomas Mercer's first cousin, Stephen Walter (1768-1807).

Maria Woodgate evidently considered the Mercers as *nouveaux riches*, referring to them as 'that noble and ancient family'. In an another letter she wrote: 'We had a very large party at Mr Mercer's; there really was fish, fresh fowl and good red herring. We made a dance of eleven couples; they certainly *meant well* but I had much rather sat down to a good comfortable game of Cards, for what pleasure do you think it could have been to me to be *pulled and panted* about by Will Mugridge and Harper [sic], *all very good people in their way as ever lived* but certainly not the most agreeable or best dancers in the world? However the Mercers *meant well*, so of course I was pleased.'

'Harper' was the vicar of Tonbridge's younger son, who occupied the Woodgate property of Pembury mill, which Turner depicted at least once. Like his grandfather, but in a smaller way, he seems to have performed the functions of steward or land agent. Meanwhile Major William Francis Woodgate had in 1809 inherited Somerhill and became partner in the Tonbridge Bank with George Children. Children lived at Ferox Hall, now incorporated in Tonbridge School, and was the father of a scientist, John George Children, whose marriage was the subject of one of Jane Austen's epistolary jokes ('Mr Children's two sons are both going to be married, John and George – They are to have one wife between them').[2] He may also have been known to Turner, who certainly met some of his scientific friends. The Tonbridge Bank began to fail and in 1813 Thomas Mercer rashly stepped into the breach and started a second bank. They all went bankrupt in 1816 and lost their estates. (At the same time a similar fate attended Jane Austen's favourite brother, Henry.)

A house which both writer and painter may have visited is that of a devotee of the Picturesque, William Locke of Norbury Park near Dorking. Another is Chevening, where Turner also sketched. It has been suggested by the late David Waldron Smithers that Jane took her character of Lady Catherine de Bourgh from Grizel, Dowager Countess Stanhope of Chevening.[3] The senior branch of the Stanhopes, represented by the 4th Earl of Chesterfield, had some of Turner's maternal cousins as their stewards in their original Nottinghamshire seat at Shelford Manor.

The villa which Turner designed for himself at Twickenham has been compared by Mavis Batey[4] with the villa of Admiral Crawford in *Mansfield Park,* though Turner's is a very modest abode.

Whether Turner ever read Jane's novels, we do not know. They do not appear

in the remnants of his working library preserved by his family. But he tried hard to write verse and enjoyed the theatre, and one may imagine would have enjoyed the human comedy in fiction just as he could show it, rather awkwardly, in paint. In the case of someone who liked to be mysterious and in the absence of further documentation, we can only guess. Following the centenary of Ruskin's death it is difficult to forget that our image of Turner has been to some extent fixed by him. Though Ruskin admired some of Turner's early Yorkshire watercolours, on the whole he had little knowledge or appreciation of the works made by Turner in Jane Austen's lifetime. He represents that enthusiastic tendency which the eighteenth century thought led to madness (as it did in his own case). It is somewhat surprising then, to read the comment of Henry James on visiting the Ruskins' home on Denmark Hill in 1869 to see his Turners: 'the house was (fundamentally) just like Miss Austen's novels'. However both Turner and Ruskin were always full of surprises.

Notes

1 The sources of the information I give in the concluding part of my history of Turner's family: *Of Geese, Mallards and Drakes: Some Notes on Turner's Family, IV, – The Marshalls and Harpurs,* J.M.W. Turner, R.A., Publications (1999). See especially Gordon and G.M.G. Woodgate, *The Woodgates of Stonewall Park and Somer Hill* (1910) and Bryan l'Anson, *The History of the l'Anson Family* (1915).

2 *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford, 1995), p.10.



Josiah Quincy, 1824 by Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828). Oil on canvas.
(Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Reproduced with permission. © 2000 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. All rights reserved.)

The Quincys and The Austens: A Cordial Connection

Farnell Parsons

Josiah Quincy was a Congressman, State Senator and Mayor of Boston before becoming president of Harvard, and his family's circle included such figures as John Quincy Adams, a relative and former U.S. president, and his wife Abigail; Mrs Alexander Hamilton; Oliver Wendell Holmes; John Trumbull; Daniel and Noah Webster; and Benjamin West. Josiah Quincy's elevation required him to entertain the Marquis de Lafayette, U.S. presidents Jackson, Monroe and soon-to-be president Van Buren. The Quincy daughters were obviously delighted to meet such notables.

The Quincys, a mirror image of the Austens, had five daughters and two sons,

their youngest son dying in infancy. After her mother's death in 1850, Eliza Susan, the oldest daughter and her father's amanuensis, took charge of the household which included Abigail and Maria. The other two daughters, Anna and Margaret, lived close by 'with their gentlemen-of-leisure-and-learning husbands, the non-ministering Revd Robert Cassie Waterston and the non-practising Dr Benjamin Greene.'[1] Perhaps because they married, Margaret and Anna were the only two to travel abroad.

The Quincy sisters became known as 'The Aunts', or more properly great-aunts, to Mark Antony De Wolfe Howe (1864-1960), a Pulitzer prize-winning author, who published the Quincy-Austen correspondence in 1926 and compiled the papers of the Quincy sisters (1814-1834) in *The Articulate Sisters* (1946). This book included the sort of domestic minutiae which Jane Austen reveals in her letters.

Susan and Anna became Jane Austen devotees, demonstrating careful reading of her novels. Anna, commenting on a visit to Delvale, home of Mr Delavan, said: 'Had a very pleasant drive about 4 miles, when the walls of *Donwell Abbey* rose to our view, the seat of a real Mr. Knightley.'[2] She published verses and an article on Jane Austen in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1863. Susan, who admired Maria Edgeworth's work and corresponded with the author, wrote to Sir Francis Austen on 6 January 1852, for an autograph or a scrap of Jane's handwriting to 'be placed among our chief treasures'.[3]

Sir Francis Austen responded to Susan Quincy's request within a month, sending an original letter from Jane at Steventon to Martha Lloyd at Ibthorpe, dated November 12, 1800 (No. 26 in Chapman's second edition of the letters), adding, 'I scarcely need observe that there never was the remotest idea of its being published'.[4] Anna was ecstatic on hearing of the letter and wrote to Susan, 'Dear Admiral Austen I think he must have been like Capt Wentworth when he was young, – and just like what Capt Wentworth would be at his age. – He has replied with true naval promptness, and evidently deserves to be Miss Austen's brother.' Her postscript added, 'If the house catches on fire to night, – please save the letter. I cannot die without the sight.'[6] On receiving a copy of Anna's letter, Sir Francis replied that Capt Harville's domestic habits, tastes and occupations were a closer copy of his own.

Admiral Austen had been in command of the North American and W. Indies Station (1844-48) where he visited Barbados, Jamaica and Antigua on board the *Vindictive* and seemed glad to have contact with an American family which not only revered his sister but helped to shape American history. He was interested in reading a published account of the trial Susan mentioned in which Josiah Quincy Jr. and John Adams had defended a British Captain Preston and his soldiers after the so-called Boston Massacre.

The English correspondent was delighted when Anna Waterston and her family visited him at Portsdown Lodge in 1856. He fondly referred to that visit in 1863 when the correspondence briefly resumed. Sir Francis touched delicately on the Civil War and spoke of his daughter's writing, praising her latest work, *The Mistakes of a Life*. He had previously sent Susan copies of her other books.

Catherine Hubback (1818-1877) had gone to California in her fifties to help one of her sons and died while living in Virginia.

At the age of 88, Sir Francis proudly reported his promotion to Admiral of the Fleet whilst bemoaning his physical inability to look and act the role. He also thanked Susan for her continuing regard for his sister's works, saying presciently, 'such testimony affords reasonable expectation that her name will be well known long after the present generation has passed away, wherever the English language is spoken or understood.'[7]

Another Austen correspondent was James Edward Austen-Leigh, who in late 1870 was compiling a smaller and less expensive edition of the *Memoir* of his aunt and sought copies of all of her letters. Susan dutifully wrote out her letter and sent it to him together with an offer to copy those which the Admiral had written. This was refused and, as Howe says, denied public access to them for more than half a century.

Notes

1 Robert A. McCaughey, *Josiah Quincy 1772-1864, The Last Federalist* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974) p.199.
2 M. A. De Wolfe Howe, ed., *The Articulate Sisters: passages from journals and letters the daughters of President Josiah Quincy of Harvard University,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946) p. 242.
3 M. A. De Wolfe Howe 'A Jane Austen letter: with other "Janeana" from an old book of autographs', *Yale Review* 15 (1925-26), p.320.
4 Ibid., p.322.
5 Ibid., p.325.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid., p.331.

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The Yorkshire connection in Emma

Andrew Banks

There is no evidence to suggest that Jane Austen ever visited Yorkshire, and therefore it is hardly surprising that references to the White Rose county are quite scarce in her writings. However, in *Emma,* the activities of the Churchill family of Enscombe in Yorkshire play a significant part in the drama of the novel. This essay will attempt to explain why Jane Austen chose to include a number of references to Yorkshire in what proved to be her last novel that she saw in print during her all too brief career as a published author.

In the second chapter of *Emma,* Jane Austen tells us in a retrospective that Mr Weston 'had satisfied an active cheerful mind and social temper by entering into the militia of his county [Surrey] then embodied. Captain Weston was a general favourite; and when the chances of his military life had introduced him to Miss Churchill, of a great Yorkshire family, and Miss Churchill fell in love with him, nobody was surprized except her brother and his wife, who had never seen him, and who were full of pride and importance, which the connection would offend.'[1]

Clive Caplan has persuasively argued that this episode in Mr Weston's life was inspired by a real life incident that was witnessed by Jane's brother Henry. In April 1795, Henry was on sick leave at Oxford when the Surrey Militia travelled through the town en route to Hull and Beverley in East Yorkshire, where the Surreys were stationed for two years from 1795 to 1797. As Caplan observes, Jane may have had



Chevet Hall, east front

this incident in mind when 'in *Emma,* she assigned Captain Weston membership of the Surreys, and it was in Yorkshire that he met and married Miss Churchill'.[2]

Jane Austen gives us very little background information about the Churchills, apart from the fact that they are 'a great Yorkshire family', who reside at Enscombe.[3] Even so, I think that it is probably more than a coincidence that Jane Austen was writing about the Churchills of Yorkshire in *Emma* at the same time that her good friend Anne Sharp was living in the county.

Anne Sharp had served as the governess to Edward Austen's children at Godmersham in Kent from 21 January 1804 to mid-January 1806. As Claire Tomalin has observed, 'Jane made an alliance with Anne Sharp ... and when [Anne] left Godmersham, she and Jane Austen maintained their friendship and corresponded, regularly, affectionately and frankly.'[4] By October 1811 Miss Sharp had been appointed as the governess to the four daughters of the Dowager Lady Pilkington. Lady Pilkington was the widow of Sir Thomas Pilkington, the seventh baronet of Chevet. The dowager and her four daughters lived at Chevet Hall near Wakefield in the old West Riding of Yorkshire, along with Sir William Pilkington, Sir Thomas's younger brother, who had inherited the baronetcy after his brother's death in 1811.[5]

Cassandra Austen tells us that her sister wrote *Emma* between 21 January 1814 and 29 March 1815,[6] and we know that Anne Sharp was corresponding with Jane Austen during that period. Anne Sharp's verdict on *Mansfield Park,* which Jane transcribed in the 'Opinions of *Mansfield Park',* is almost certainly an excerpt from one of Miss Sharp's letters to her Chawton friend,[7] and there is a delightful reference to Miss Sharp in one of Jane's letters to Cassandra dated Thursday 23 June 1814:

> This Post has brought me a Letter from Miss Sharpe. Poor thing! she has been suffering indeed! but is now in a comparative state of comfort. She is at Sir W[illiam] P[ilkington]'s in Yorkshire, with the Children, & there is no appearance of her quitting them. – Of course, we lose the pleasure of seeing her here. She writes highly of Sir W^{m} – I do so want him to marry her! –There is a Dow: Lady P. presiding there, to make it all right. – The *Man* is the same; but she does not mention what he is by Profession or Trade. – She does not think that Lady P. was privy to his Scheme on her; but on being in his power, yielded. –Oh! Sir W^{m} – Sir W^{m} – how I will love you, if you will love Miss Sharp![8]

No doubt Jane's suggestion that Sir William should marry Miss Sharp was a playful one. As it turned out, Sir William eventually married a certain Mary Swinnerton in 1825.[9]

Therefore in conclusion, it would seem that the coincidence between Jane's correspondence with Miss Sharp at Chevet and her writing of *Emma* supports Marilyn Joice's assertion that 'it is difficult to resist the idea that, in creating Enscombe, albeit in no great detail, Jane Austen might have had Chevet in mind'.[10] Unfortunately for us, Chevet Hall was demolished by the Wakefield Corporation in 1949. All that survives is the lodge and a pair of handsome gates, which are situated in Chevet Lane just outside Wakefield.

I would like to thank Marilyn Joice, whose identification of Chevet as the likely model for Enscombe in Emma, *was the foundation stone upon which this essay was built, and also Irene Collins, for her help and advice.*

Notes

1 Jane Austen, *Emma*, ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen, 3rd edn., 1933), p.15.
2 Clive Caplan, 'Jane Austen's Soldier Brother: The Military Career of Henry Thomas Austen of the Oxfordshire Militia, 1793 to 1801', *Persuasions* 18, December 1996, p.130.
3 *Emma,* p.15.
4 Claire Tomalin, 'Jane Austen: being rich, being poor', *Report* for 1999, p.73.
5 *The Letters of Jane Austen,* ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford, 1995), pp.562, 572.
6 Maggie Lane, *Jane Austen's World* (Carlton Books, 1997), p.15.
7 Jane Austen, *Minor Works,* ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. B.C. Southam (Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen, 1969), p.434.
8 *Letters,* p.265.
9 Ibid., p.562.
10 Marilyn Joice, 'Chevet: Could this be Enscombe?', *The Northern Branch of the Jane Austen Society Newsletter* (September 2000), p.8.

The Oscar-winning actor Robert Donat had just finished filming *Goodbye Mr Chips* with Greer Garson, who was later to be an elegant Elizabeth Bennet, when the germ of an idea entered his mind. Miss Garson's delightful personality and talent spurred him to consider forming his own theatrical company. He had visions of using actors he particularly admired in plays of merit and reputation. This was in late 1938; war loomed on the horizon and he realised, reluctantly, that these wistful plans would have to be shelved. However, after filming *The Young Mr Pitt* in 1942, he decided to go into theatrical management, no matter what the obstacles. He acquired a script of Jane Austen's *Emma* which had been entertainingly adapted from the novel by Gordon Glennon, who was to become famous a few years later for his film script of *The Wicked Lady* starring Margaret Lockwood.

Robert Donat engaged a trusted friend, Jack Minster, to direct *Emma*, with the beautiful Anna Neagle in the lead. (Minster was also engaged to direct Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* for Donat's debut production in management, at the Westminster Theatre.) It was decided to send *Emma* out on tour, since it would be a wonderful tonic for the hard-pressed provinces which had suffered dreadfully from enemy bombing. *Emma* opened at Rugby in August 1943 and gave the audience romance and humour in equal measure, a great boost to morale. The production toured the country, visiting major theatres at Glasgow, Manchester and Bristol, where a smaller repertory production of *Emma* had been mounted at the Little Theatre, in March 1943,[1] giving Bristol the distinction of having two separate productions of a Jane Austen novel on stage during the war. All performances of *Emma* commenced at 6.15pm, which allowed patrons time to get home safely before the bombs fell.

Anna Neagle remembered the moment when Robert Donat asked her to play Emma: 'Robert asked me to do a play. Jane Austen's *Emma*. I was thrilled. I had always adored Jane's novels and jumped at the chance of playing one of her heroines. It seemed to me, too, perfect escapist entertainment. For a couple of hours, anyway, our audiences could leave behind the horrors of the mid-20th century for the leisurely calm of the early 19th. It was a superb production.' She recalled wearing a simple white dress, designed by Gladys Calthorp, with no touch of colour except a garnet pendant which picked up the light. 'Nothing extraordinary about the dress at all – but every performance as I entered centre stage through the double doors of Emma's drawing room the audience spontaneously applauded. It does not often happen but when it does – it gives such a glow of pleasure.' [2]

The modest Miss Neagle does not mention her conscientious study of Jane Austen's novel, even before rehearsals began. Her copy of *Emma*, in the 1923 Adelphi edition, is now at Jane Austen's House, Chawton, and bears heavy annotations in Anna Neagle's hand.[3] The tour of *Emma* was anticipated to last three months with a transfer to London, thereafter. However, threats from doodle-bug bombing persuaded Donat to keep the show touring until the danger was over. 'The provinces loved *Emma*,' Anna Neagle wrote. 'They responded exactly as we had hoped: it was a happy tour for me.' So happy that she christened her home at



Anna Neagle with George Thirlwell as Mr Elton *(Theatre World)*



with Grey Blake as Frank Churchill *(Theatre World)*



l.to.r. Frank Allenby (Mr Knightley), Gravely Edwards (Mr Woodhouse), Anna Neagle *(Theatre World)*



Robert Donat

Elstree 'Hartfield'.

Emma finally opened at the St James's Theatre, London, on Tuesday 6 February 1945. Anna Neagle was deeply touched by her husband's first night gift, a rare first edition of *Emma*, published in 1816 (film producer Herbert Wilcox was the besotted and thoughtful husband). Anna's dressing-room was filled with magnificent roses from Donat and as she applied her make-up she relished the thought of her appearance, at last, as Emma Woodhouse, on the London stage. The curtain rose on the drawing room at Hartfield where Mr Woodhouse and Mrs Weston are discovered playing backgammon. ... What would London make of *Emma*? The Times reviewer gave this report:

> The Janeites had better take warning. This adaptation is not for them. They would certainly find Emma lacking in that sensibility which enables Mr Knightley to make inexperience the confident excuse for her meddlesome matchmaking. They would hardly recognise a Mr Woodhouse so shockingly watered down in character that he is little more than the conventional obstacle to a happy ending.
>
> These are ruinous losses to set against a quite perfect representation of Mr Knightley. And those who went in search of the fine shades might also be a little disconcerted to be shown so plainly that there are limits to the use of irony on the stage. As everyone knows nothing is more effective than stage irony which has been properly prepared for, but here 'how thick the bursts come crowding' and the poor playgoer is deafened by spoken irony.
>
> But we are not all Janeites, and this artificial story of a sparkling cocksure young woman who scarcely deserves the final reward of so perceptive a man as Mr Knightley, is handsomely mounted and charmingly dressed. There is some excellent conversation to distract from the eventlessness of the stage. There is a lively performance by Miss Anna Neagle, whose Emma, though wanting sensibility has plenty of artificial animation and a delightful social charm. There is an admirable Miss Bates, who is never, as Miss Gillian Lind handles her, a bore and is at the moment of Emma's thoughtless jest genuinely pathetic. There is a dashingly effective sketch of the vulgar Mrs Elton by Miss Ambrosine Philpotts, so effective indeed that at times it plays everyone else off the stage, and there is, best of all, the flawlessly measured and realistic Mr Knightley of Mr Frank Allenby. [4]

Very soon after the play opened fate took a hand; a new wave of deadly doodle-bug bombs rained down on London. Even early curtain-up times, to allow London audiences to get home before the raids started, failed to save the show. The violence and destruction of the bombs sounded *Emma*'s death knell. The show closed, as did many theatres during this final period of the war. Robert Donat was devastated, but he managed carry on with his own company for another year before he gave the project up.[5]

Anna Neagle's own words paint the picture of an incident during the run of *Emma* which brought the house down:

There was no doubt that the V-2s were bad for business. One matinée, when the theatre was packed with ladies (mainly elderly), there was a tremendous crash, a V-2 rocket had actually landed not far from the theatre. Everything rocked. Mr Weston, one of the characters in the play, burst on to the stage crying, 'Oh, a terrible thing has happened, my love.' 'What is it, my love ?' his wife asked in alarm.

'A catastrophe. Someone has broken into the turkey house. Not a turkey left!'

A momentary pause – and then a roar of laughter swept through the theatre. ... We learned later that we had, in fact, had a lucky escape.[6]

Notes

1 David Gilson, A *Bibliography of Jane Austen* (Oxford, 1982), p. 415. This *Emma* adapted by John Lindsay & Ronald Russell.
2 Anna Neagle, *There's Always Tomorrow* (London 1974), pp. 146-147.
3 David Gilson, *Report* for 1979, p. 18.
4 Report in *The Times* , Thursday 8 February 1945.
5 J.C. Trewin, *Robert Donat* (London 1968), p. 238.
6 Neagle, p. 148.

Jane Austen and South Africa

David Gilson

Readers of *Sense and Sensibility* will recall the kindly Mrs Jennings's appearance (pp.197-98 of R.W. Chapman's edition of the novel, Oxford 1923 and later reprints) carrying a glass of 'the finest old Constantia wine', which the late Mr Jennings had found beneficial when 'he had a touch of his old cholicky gout' ; she intends it to comfort Marianne Dashwood, heartbroken after her betrayal by Willoughby, but Marianne's sister Elinor drinks it in her stead.

The Chapman edition, predictably, supplies no note to explain the nature and origin of Constantia wine. The explanation was left to Dr Enid Starkie, who in her letter to the Editor of *The Times Literary Supplement,* 11 October 1941, p.507, headed 'A Line in Baudelaire', was concerned to explain as Constantia wine the word 'constance' appearing in the poem entitled 'Sed non Satiata', in Baudelaire's collection *Les Fleurs du Mal,* 1857; Dr Starkie, who was then preparing an edition of the latter work, went on to give substantial details of the wine in question.

We learn that Constantia is a sweet dessert wine from the Western Cape Province of South Africa, specifically from the vineyards of Groot Constantia, an estate at Wynberg, ten miles from Capetown (the original old Dutch farmhouse on this property was built in the late 17th century by Willem Adriaan Van der Stel, Governor of the Cape from 1699 to 1707, who named it after his wife Constance). The wine seems to have been imported into England at an early date, and much appreciated here, especially during the first half of the 19th century (Queen Victoria is said to have had a particular fondness for it). Charles Baudelaire apparently owed his knowledge of it to a stop he had made at the Cape in 1841 when returning to France from Mauritius.

Enid Starkie was not primarily concerned with Jane Austen's mention of Constantia; but two writers in the next issue of *The Times Literary Supplement,* 18 October 1941, p.519 (J.N.M. and T. Erskine Swanzy) seized on the information as at last explaining the reference in *Sense and Sensibility.* I have found on my own account that the earliest dated mention of the name 'Constantia' recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is of 1772 (Jane Austen's 1811 mention being recorded in the same work).

I recently came across a 20th century South African reference both to Constantia wine and to *Sense and Sensibility,* on p.56 of *Of Generals and Gardens,* the autobiography (published in 1976 by Weidenfeld and Nicolson) of Peter Coats, the garden designer and historian (born 1910). In 1940 the writer was aide-de-camp to General Wavell (then Commander-in-Chief of the Middle East forces, later Field Marshal Earl Wavell, penultimate Viceroy of India), and went with Wavell to South Africa, where he became friendly with the Prime Minister, General Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950). Dining with Smuts at his official residence, Groote Schur, Peter Coats told him that he had visited and admired the old house at Groot Constantia, and had heard that there was a very good wine of that name, whereupon

Smuts informed him that this wine had been supplied regularly to Napoleon when in exile on St Helena. Then (I quote Peter Coats) 'Changing the subject slightly, I said I remembered that Constantia had been recommended by a character in one of Jane Austen's novels, as a cure for a broken heart. "Indeed," he replied at once, "by Mrs Jennings in *Sense and Sensibility*". His memory was extraordinary, and his knowledge encyclopaedic.'

South Africa's celebrations of the Millennium in 2000 again brought together Jane Austen and Constantia, since the Groot Constantia vineyard produced a Millennium vintage of 2000 bottles of Constantia wine (described specifically as Sauvignon Blanc) dedicated to Jane Austen; I owe this information to Joan Austen-Leigh's article 'A Bottle of Wine', published in the September 2000 issue of *The Inkwell,* the newsletter of the Victoria, British Columbia region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, pp.11-12 (as well as in *The Writing Desk,* the newsletter of the Toronto chapter), from which I quote with the writer's permission; Joan Austen-Leigh was presented by friends with Bottle No.5 of this vintage. The specially made bottles had Jane Austen's name incised in the glass, while one of the labels, cut apparently in the shape of the map of South Africa, reproduced a sample of the novelist's handwriting, taken from Act Three, Scene One of the play *Sir Charles Grandison* (p.27 of the facsimile of the manuscript published by David Astor at Jubilee Books, Burford in 1981, and pp.46 and 87 of the text of the play edited by Brian Southam, Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1980). Joan Austen-Leigh suggests in her article that Jane Austen may have come across the wine when staying with her brother Edward at Godmersham, or even when with Henry Austen in London.

Pride and Prejudice and *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*

J.A. Hilton

The origin of the title *Pride and Prejudice* can be found in the second chapter of Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in a passage pregnant with the themes of the novel:[1]

> Hope, the best comfort of our imperfect condition, was not denied to the Roman slave, and if he had any opportunity of rendering himself either useful or agreeable, he might very naturally expect that the diligence and fidelity of a few years would be rewarded with the inestimable gift of freedom. ... Without destroying the distinction of ranks, a distant prospect of freedom and honours was presented, even to those whom *pride and prejudice* [my italics] almost disdained to number among the human species.[2]

In this passage, Jane Austen could have found not only the title for her novel but also, in its last sentence, a description of Elizabeth Bennet's situation, and in its first sentence, an account of Darcy's courtship.

There are, of course, other sources for the title *Pride and Prejudice*. It is usually said to be derived from Fanny Burney's *Cecilia*.[3] It is also a proverbial phrase, alliterative and antithetical like *Sense and Sensibility*: thus Mrs Thrale remarks that Pride and Prejudice hindered my longer Residence in a Place w[hi]ch indeed had lost its Charms for me'.[4]

Admittedly there is apparently no explicit reference to Gibbon in Jane Austen, but it is not unlikely that she had come across his work. She had a keen interest in history, writing her own juvenile *History of England*. She read extensively in history, including Oliver Goldsmith's *The History of England* and Robert Henry's *History of Great Britain*. She also records her intention to purchase Boswell's *Life of Johnson, 5* in which Gibbon figures, in particular in the following passage:

> The common remark as to the utility of reading history being made:- JOHNSON. 'We must consider how very little history there is; I mean real authentick history. That certain Kings reigned, and certain battles were fought, we can depend upon as true; but all the colouring, all the philosophy of history is conjecture.' BOSWELL. 'Then, Sir, you would reduce all history to no better than an almanack, a mere chronological series of remarkable events.' Mr. Gibbon, who must at that time have been employed upon his history, of which he published the first volume in the following year, was present; but he did not step forth in defence of that species of writing. He probably did not like to *trust* himself with JOHNSON![6]

In *Northanger Abbey* Catherine Morland and the Tilneys discuss history as literature, Eleanor Tilney citing Hume and Robertson, and twice remarking 'I am fond of history'.[7] The same novel also contains Jane Austen's celebration of the novelist as a serious artist in contrast to 'the nine-hundredth abridger of the

History of England'.[8] Despite her protestation that she was 'the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress',[9] she was not only well-read in history but also conscious of its nature as a branch of narrative literature like the novel, although ostensibly concerned with fact rather than fiction: 'If a speech be well drawn up, I read it with pleasure, by whomsoever it may be made – and probably with much greater, if the production of Mr Hume or Mr Robertson, than if the genuine words of Caractacus. Agricola, or Alfred the Great.'[10] It seems probable that, even if Jane Austen had never read or even tried to read Gibbon, she would have seen or at least heard of his work. If she had ever tried to read his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* she might well have got as far as its second chapter.

Gibbon's conclusion about slavery – 'Without destroying the distinction of ranks, a distant prospect of freedom and honours was presented, even to those whom pride and prejudice almost disdained to number among the human species'[11] – describes Elizabeth's case. She is enslaved by her status as a spinster, and she is Darcy's social inferior. Marriage 'was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune'.[12] Even Lydia's marriage gives her precedence over her older sisters: 'Ah! Jane, I take your place now, and you must go lower, because I am a married woman.'[13] In making his first proposal to Elizabeth, Darcy remarks on the difference in their rank: 'His sense of her inferiority – of its being a degradation';[14] '"Could you expect me to rejoice in the inferiority of your connections? To congratulate myself on the hope of relations, whose condition in life is so decidedly beneath my own?"'[15] Elizabeth accepts Darcy's remarks on the behaviour of her family: 'When she came to that part of the letter in which her family were mentioned in terms of such mortifying. yet merited reproach, her sense of shame was severe. The justice of the charge struck her too forcibly for denial'.[16] Lydia's elopement apparently completes her humiliation: 'every thing *must* sink under such a proof of family weakness, such an assurance of the deepest disgrace.'[17] When she is finally convinced that she is suited to Darcy, Lydia's marriage seems an insuperable obstacle to her own: 'but no such marriage could now teach the admiring multitude what connubial felicity really was. An union of a different tendency, and precluding the possibility of the other, was soon to be formed in their family'.[18] It is Lady Catherine de Bourgh's officious attempt to prevent Elizabeth marrying Darcy – '"Are the shades of Pemberley to be thus polluted?"'[19] – that precipitates Darcy's second proposal, and after the marriage even 'she condescended to wait on them at Pemberley, in spite of that pollution which its woods had received'.[20]

Gibbon's paragraph opens with a sentence which describes Darcy's relations with Elizabeth: 'Hope, the best comfort of our imperfect condition, was not denied to the Roman slave, and if he had any opportunity of rendering himself either useful or agreeable, he might very naturally expect that the diligence and fidelity of a few years would be rewarded with the inestimable gift of freedom'.[21] Lady Catherine's interview with Elizabeth '"taught me to hope, said he, as I had scarcely ever allowed myself to hope before"'.[22] His declaration follows Elizabeth's

expression of gratitude "'for that generous compassion which induced you to take so much trouble, and bear so many mortifications"'.[23] Elizabeth's acceptance of Darcy's proposal is followed by her reflection on the philosophy of history: "'You must learn some of my philosophy. Think only of the past as its remembrance gives you pleasure."'[24]

In his *Autobiography* Gibbon observed that 'The favourite companions of my leisure were our English writers since the Revolution: they breathe the spirit of reason and liberty: ...The old reproach that no British altars had been raised to the Muse of History was recently disproved by the first performances of Robertson and Hume'.[25] It is 'the spirit of reason and liberty,' which informs the structure of *Pride and Prejudice.*

Notes

1 I am grateful to Miss Angela Cunningham and to Dr Anne McDermott for their help in the preparation of this paper.
2 Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Everyman edition 6 vols, London, 1993), I, p.48.
3 Jane Austen. *Pride and Prejudice,* edited by Tony Tanner (Penguin edition, Harmondsworth, 1972), pp. 10-1 I.
4 Moses Tyson and Henry Guppy (eds). *The French Journals of Mrs Thrale and Doctor Johnson* (Manchester, 1932), p. 203.
5 *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford 1995), pp.22, 59, 17, 38; R.W.Chapman ed., *The Novels of Jane Austen* (5 vols, Oxford, 1933), III. *Mansfield Park,* p. 419.
6 James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (Oxford, 1953), p.628.
7 *Novels, V, Northanger Abbey,* pp. 108-109.
8 *Novels, V, Northanger Abbey,* p. 37.
9 *Letters*, p. 185.
10 *Novels, V, Northanger Abbey,* p. 109.
11 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall, I, p* 48.
12 *Novels, II, Pride and Prejudice,* p. 122.
13 Ibid., p. 317.
14 Ibid., p. 189.
15 Ibid., p. 192.
16 Ibid., pp. 208-209.
17 Ibid., p. 278.
18 Ibid., p. 312.
19 Ibid., p. 357.
20 Ibid,. p. 388.
21 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall,* I, p. 47.
22 *Novels, II, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 367.
23 Ibid., p. 366.
24 Ibid., pp. 368-69.
25 Edward Gibbon, *Autobiography* (Everyman edition, London, 1911), p.92.

Without education, fortune or connections ...

Michael Tatham

It is a tribute to Jane Austen's lasting appeal as a moralist and an observer of society that our modern preoccupation with the relative importance of hereditary and environmental factors in influencing a child's development should have played such an interesting part in *Mansfield Park.*

In more recent years there has, of course, been a tendency to reject the idea that a setting for a book which is at once religious, conservative, paternalistic and authoritarian can ever be seen as a source of integrity and virtue. Fanny and Edmund may both still be striving for the good – there are evangelical dimensions to Edmund's discussion with Mary Crawford at Sotherton – but these restricted virtues are now seldom thought to be an adequate counterweight to the shortcomings of the Mansfield way of life. In modern eyes what is a good deal more in evidence is the damning record of a debauched elder son; unprincipled and superficial daughters; the indolence of Lady Bertram; the class snobbery; and the remote, authoritarian stuffiness of Sir Thomas. What is now found to be rather surprising is that Mansfield could for so long have been seen in favourable terms, or that the book as a whole should have ever been regarded as one in which Jane Austen 'pays tribute to the virtuous fundamental of her upbringing, ranging herself with those whom she considers right'.[1]

It is possible that the earlier and more favourable impression was due in part to factors always rather to one side of the text: that the hero and heroine were identified with the continuity of the estate; a general awareness that the author's conservative disposition would always have led her to distrust modern and fashionable behaviour (the Crawfords); and, above all, that the alternative offered by Portsmouth should be so unattractive.

About Portsmouth – that Hobbesian jungle of barely differentiated chaos –there can scarcely be two opinions. Indeed the shock Fanny experiences on finding herself once again with her proper family goes a long way towards strengthening the impression that what she has left behind her at Mansfield – those civilising influences of propriety and decorum – really are everything she imagines them to be, and that Mansfield Park has in fact been that benign sanctuary where 'everybody's feelings were consulted'. We may be aware that this is not an entirely accurate picture, but it is made to seem as if it is, if only because the contrasting view of Price family life in Portsmouth is presented in such unattractive clarity. With its blue milk and greasy fingerprints, the Portsmouth household becomes not merely an example of what happens when people are reduced to coping with life with too many children and insufficient income, but takes on the colouring of a quasi-political pamphlet. Here, clearly, is a household in poverty, its children neglected, and here, consequently, we shall expect to find ill-health, violence, rudeness and misery. In short, Portsmouth is a society of victims who are just as much products of economic and class injustice as their despised daughter in her fireless room at

Mansfield.

Unfortunately, this understandable disposition to see Portsmouth as occupying some opposite environmental pole to Mansfield Park has had the effect of preventing us from noticing what Jane Austen actually tells us about the Price family. It might be instructive to know, for example, how many readers are aware that two older Price boys (John and Richard) have already left home and that one of them has a clerical post in London while the other is a midshipman. What is practically never noticed about the younger members of the family – especially as they start to mature – is the consistent way they completely undermine the idea that Portsmouth is some sort of black to Mansfield's white. That the whole thing is a lot more complicated than we generally realize is also indicated by the fact that Fanny herself is the only person who bridges both these worlds and while she certainly believes that her values have been inculcated by the good breeding and religious practices of Mansfield, the truth remains that very few of the people she encounters in Northamptonshire represent these values as effectively as she herself does.

Such a reading of an apparently conservative text may seem perverse at first sight but is difficult to discount once we have become fully aware of the contrast between the spoilt young people at Mansfield and the vigorous savages so improvidently spawned by the Prices. What is at stake is the question how far moral sensibility and the right use of intelligence fall within the scope of the environment or remain very much at the mercy of genetics.

In so far as Mansfield has played some part in forming Edmund, and Edmund in turn has done his best to encourage Fanny into good reading and right thinking (just as Miss Lee has tutored her in the more elegant accomplishments) there is a case for the social disciplines and economic advantages which have made these benefits possible. That these arrangements are, however, not sufficient in themselves is recognised even by Sir Thomas Bertram in his reference to the vital ingredient of 'living principle'. At first glance this seems – as Sir Thomas clearly thinks – a useful explanation for much that is wrong at Mansfield, but it can hardly be sufficient, for when we turn to Portsmouth we find not only that such social forms as do exist are as likely as not to be destructive, but that there is no conscious acceptance of any principle either living or dead. It is all very odd. At Portsmouth where there is apparently nothing to account for it, the ratio of success to failure is very much higher than that obtaining at Mansfield.

It is impossible not to appreciate that as the Price children reach adolescence they start to develop in a way astonishingly superior to their surroundings. It is not just that they are average young people: several of them are almost embarrassingly good. Even if we allow for the inaccuracy of Fanny's early memories and childish understanding, it remains clear that Mary – that shadowy figure who lived and died without knowing anything better then the Price household – was not only, as Fanny assures us, 'remarkably amicable', but a brave and kind-hearted girl. It is precisely because Susan remembers her dead sister so affectionately that the question of the ownership of the silver knife is of serious importance.

William, who is well-regarded at Mansfield, is affectionate and sensible, and

he possesses these good qualities well before there has been time for either naval life or other benevolent influences to have taken effect. It is William who gives Fanny her treasured cross and – perhaps less surprisingly – animates the jaded Henry Crawford with his stimulating accounts of life at sea.

Sam is still at home when Fanny arrives. In point of age he is William's closest brother and – like William – he is destined for the Navy. Although at this stage Sam is 'loud and overbearing' in the style of his father, he is also 'clever and intelligent' and before he leaves home we learn that he is already beginning to be 'influence by Fanny's services'. These hints are sufficient to make us believe that Sam will not only follow in his brothers' footsteps, but, like William, will almost certainly do very well. (The very fact that almost all the older Price boys are going in the Navy would have been a recommendation in Austen eyes). Only Betsey and the two youngest Price infants remain for the present beyond redemption, and this – if their older brothers and sisters are any guide – may be merely a matter of age.

Although Fanny Price herself is the kind of young woman Jane Austen would almost certainly have found rather too good for her, she is not quite the paragon of virtue she is made out to be: it comes almost as a relief to see that her rivalry with Mary Crawford brings out a less generous side to her personality. For all that, there is no doubt that Fanny's merits belong every bit as much to Portsmouth as to Mansfield. Mansfield may have improved her, but there is no question that her sensibility and good intentions have come with her from Portsmouth. As D.W. Harding remarks, in so far as Fanny is the princess brought up by unworthy parents she never loses the delicate sensibilities which are an inborn part of her.

It is Susan Price, however, who is the essential key to what is going on. At first Fanny cannot approve of her sister. She is not at all Fanny's style. But from the moment of Fanny's arrival at Portsmouth on that cold winter afternoon we are aware that it is Susan alone who is struggling (and struggling thanklessly, for the girl is little more than a drudge) to sustain whatever order and decency the Price family still possesses. When the travellers arrive it is Susan who is unfairly blamed for the poor fire and who 'startles' Fanny when she defends herself in a 'fearless tone'. It is Susan, for all she has been blamed so unreasonably, who helps Rebecca bring in the tea and attempts to keep order among the children. Fanny can only be shocked. She is no more capable of recognising Susan's sterling qualities than she has previously been capable of appreciating Mary Crawford's high spirits and intelligent good nature. (It is noticeable that Mary and Susan share a number of characteristics: both have courage and energy and a 'good clear understanding', both have the rarer sort of moral delicacy – although since Mary Crawford's delicacy is allied to a lively wit this side of her personality is sometimes missed.)

Consequently, although Fanny has heard the true story of Mary Price's silver knife – bequeathed to Susan and withheld by Mrs Price in the interests of her favourite (Betsey) – and despite knowing that Susan is in the right, she condemns her for remonstrating with Sam because her words 'though very reasonable in themselves' had been delivered with an 'ill-timed and powerless warmth'. The gross injustice of Fanny's attitude is revealed when she blames Susan for falling

short of her own absurd image of the Mansfield regime:

> ... its beloved inmates, its happy ways. ... The elegance, propriety, regularity, harmony – and perhaps, above all, the peace and tranquillity... no sounds of contention, no raised voices, no abrupt bursts, no tread of violence...[2]

It is against this idealised picture of a place where Fanny herself had often been miserable that she judges Susan and judges her in terms which would have been perfectly in order if they had been attributed to aunt Bertram.

> of Susan's temper, she had many doubts. Her continual disagreements with her mother, her rash squabbles with Tom and Charles, and petulance with Betsey, were at least so distressing to Fanny, that though admitting they were by no means without provocation, she feared the disposition that could push them to such length must be far from amiable and from affording any repose to herself.[3]

As a pattern of self-interested foolishness Fanny's thoughts have no more to be said for them than that other unworthy Portsmouth appraisal that Mary Crawford 'had only learnt to think nothing of consequence but money'.

Fortunately for Susan, however, she is not a rival for Edmund's affections and consequently there is time for Fanny to begin to appreciate her sister's good qualities. Were it not that nothing in the development of the main plot hinges on Fanny's better understanding, we should have no doubt heard rather more about it. As it is Jane Austen uses Fanny's reflections as the beginning of an explanation for what is evidently so surprising about her sister.

> The first solid consolation which Fanny received for the evils of home, the first which her judgment could entirely approve, and which gave any promise of durability, was a better knowledge of Susan, and a hope of being of service to her. Susan had always behaved pleasantly to herself, but the determined character of her general manners had astonished and alarmed her, and it was at least a fortnight before she began to understand a disposition so totally different from her own. Susan saw that much was wrong at home, and wanted to set it right. That a girl of fourteen, acting only on her own unassisted reason, should err in the method of reform was not wonderful; and Fanny soon became more disposed to admire the natural light of the mind which could so early distinguish justly, than to censure severely the faults of conduct to which it led. Susan was only acting on the same truths, and pursuing the same system, which her own judgment acknowledged, but which her more supine and yielding temper would have shrunk from asserting. Susan tried to be useful, where *she* could only have gone away and cried; and that Susan was useful she could perceive; that things, bad as they were, would have been worse but for such an interposition, and that both her mother and Betsey were restrained from some excesses of very offensive indulgence and vulgarity.
>
> In every argument with her mother, Susan had in point of reason the advantage, and never was there any maternal tenderness to buy her off. The blind fondness which was for ever producing evil around her, *she* had never known. There was

no gratitude for affection past or present, to make her bear with its excesses to the others.

All this became gradually evident, and gradually placed Susan before her sister as an object of mingled compassion and respect. That her manner was wrong, however, at times very wrong – her measures often ill-chosen and ill-timed, and her looks and language very often indefensible, Fanny could not cease to feel; but she began to hope they might be rectified.[4]

It is this belated recognition of her sister's merits which leads Fanny to purchase the new silver knife for Betsey and paves the way for Susan to regain her rightful possession. Fanny's kind deed restores a measure of peace to the household. This is creditable, but what is most remarkable about the episode is not Fanny's good deed, but the way Susan herself, for all the neglect of her upbringing and insensitive parents, is only anxious that Fanny may feel that she has been in the wrong.

...pleased as she was to be mistress of property which she had been struggling for at least two years, she yet feared that her sister's judgment had been against her, and that a reproof was designed her for having so struggled as to make the purchase necessary for the tranquillity of the house.[5]

No sooner have we recovered from our surprise at this delicacy of feeling on the part of an uncultured and – in the modern idiom – deprived and underprivileged girl, than Jane Austen presents a revised account of Fanny's state of mind. As is only to be expected, Fanny's thoughts verge on the self-congratulatory, but they do at least begin to address the question how it is that virtues such as Susan's can ever have come into existence in such surroundings.

Her greatest wonder on the subject soon became – not that Susan should have been provoked into disrespect and impatience against her better knowledge – but that so much better knowledge, so many good notions, should have been hers at all; and that, brought up in the midst of negligence and error, she should have formed such proper opinions of what ought to be – she, who had no cousin Edmund to direct her thoughts or fix her principles.[6]

This is as far as Fanny considers the matter and as close as she comes to acknowledging that the principles which animate Susan have somehow taken root in Portsmouth. It is a surprising discovery. And what is yet more remarkable, the qualities of character engendered in the Price family prove more reliable than those acquired at Mansfield. What is also quite beyond doubt is the fact that in what are practically the last words we hear from him, Sir Thomas himself begins to repudiate those forms of social stability and decorum which have been at the heart of the Mansfield ideal. Gone are those nice distinctions of rank – gradations which, until now, have seemed part of the natural order of things. The arguments for proper nurture and social training and good breeding (in a non-genetic sense) have been tried and found wanting.

Sir Thomas saw repeated, and for ever repeated reason to rejoice in what he had done for them all, and acknowledge the advantages of early hardship and discipline and the consciousness of being born to struggle and endure.[7]

Amusingly, just as Sir Thomas has failed to understand that the external forms of polite society and a respectable upbringing are insufficient in themselves, he still fails to grasp the real situation. In presenting her readers with Sir Thomas's revised opinions, Jane Austen takes care to ensure that they continue to fall well short of the truth. What Sir Thomas has failed to see is that none of the Price virtues can be attributed to any form of discipline. Whatever there may be at Portsmouth it is certainly not discipline, and an early experience of minor hardships and a consciousness of having to make one's way in the world are almost universal human experiences – they establish nothing.

If we are to account satisfactorily for the success of the Price children it is difficult to see how we can avoid some genetic explanation. It is only by this means that we shall be able to see why it was that when one of the Miss Wards of Huntingdon married a Mr Price she was not in fact making quite the mistake which at the time everyone had supposed.

> Miss Frances married, in the common phrase, to disoblige her family, and by fixing on a Lieutenant of Marines, without education, fortune, or connections, did it very thoroughly. She could hardly have made a more untoward choice.[8]

We know very little about Mr Price or his family background, but we do know from his conduct during Henry Crawford's visit to Portsmouth that he is capable of better behaviour than Fanny had supposed likely:

> ... a very different Mr. Price ... His manners now, though not polished, were more than passable; they were grateful, animated, manly ... his loud tones did very well in the open air, and there was not a single oath to be heard.[9]

The man who has seemed so far from the gentlemanly ideal is suddenly found to be capable of very tolerable behaviour and polite sociability. And this pleasing alteration, muted though it is and no doubt still off-set by the inadequacies of his wife and the exigencies of life as a half-pay officer, may well be the clue to what has seemed so unaccountable. There is nothing, certainly, from what we know of the three Miss Wards of Huntingdon to encourage us to look in their direction for a good genetic strain. Fanny's mother appears to have very few domestic virtues and Fanny herself with her 'supine temperament' is more easily recognisable as Mrs Price's daughter and aunt Bertram's niece than any of her siblings.

Somewhat ironically, if the beneficial genetic strain which emanates from Mr Price is in fact responsible for the future well-being of the Mansfield estate, it is a circumstance which offers as little comfort to social reformers (tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime) as to those who believe that a traditional Christian upbringing and conventional disciplines will change the nature of the beast.

Notes

1 D.W. Harding, *Regulated Hatred and Other Essays on Jane Austen*, ed. Monica Lawlor (London, 1998), pp. 18-19.

2 *Mansfield Park*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford, 3rd edn., 1934), pp. 391-92.

3 Ibid., p. 391.

4 Ibid., pp. 395-96.
5 Ibid., p. 347.
6 Ibid., pp. 397-98.
7 Ibid., p. 473.

Jane Austen Studies
Supplement for 1999
Barry Roth

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Notes on Sales 2000

Christine Penney

A feature of the final year of the twentieth century has been the increase in internet selling. Those with leisure to walk through the wilderness of the World Wide Web can find rich pickings in the proliferation both of bibliographic websites and sites of individual booksellers. These do not, so far, compare with the information available in a traditional catalogue but they will inevitably find their way into these reports, since occasionally the website is the only source. I have not been hunting for them routinely but I shall make an effort to do so next year.

First and early editions

Sense and Sensibility

A copy of the first edition, 1811 (Gilson Al), lacking the half-titles and final blanks, was offered in the Christie's, New York, sale on 12 April. This was part of Lot 197, which comprised a set of first or early editions of splendid provenance; all copies bore the contemporary ownership signatures of Elizabeth Heathcote and Elizabeth Cooke Trench. Elizabeth Heathcote was born Elizabeth Bigg of Manydown Park, a close friend of Jane Austen who might, if events had proceeded differently, have become her sister-in-law — in which case it is unlikely that I would be writing this report. All 15 vols. were uniformly bound in contemporary quarter roan and drab boards, spines ruled and titled in gilt, with some minor wear and professional repairs. The estimate for the complete Lot was $20,000 - $30,000 but the hammer price exceeded this, at $49,350. Another copy of the first edition was Lot 71 in the Sotheby sale on 19 December. With the half-titles and final blanks to vols. 2 and 3 the set was bound in contemporary half calf, gilt, with red morocco labels on the spines and the bookplates of Francis, Lord Gray (the fourteenth Lord Gray, 1765-1858, Postmaster General, FRS and President of the Society of Antiquaries). The estimate was £6,000-£8,000 but the hammer price far exceeded this, at £29,000. Item 70 in Jarndyce's Catalogue 137 was a copy of the second edition, 1813 (Gilson A2), lacking the half-titles and bound in contemporary half green calf faded to brown. The price was £3,800. Another copy of this edition was Item 9 in Maggs's Catalogue 1288, priced at £15,000. This was in fact a reappearance of the copy in original boards offered in their Catalogue 1274, described in my last report. A copy of the same edition, missed from my last report, was Lot 28 at Christie's, New York, on 17 November 1999. This had the half-titles and final blanks and was bound in modern red half morocco and marbled boards. The estimate was $2,000-$3,000 and the hammer price $3,680. The Swann Galleries of New York had, at Lot 7 in their sale on 22 June, a copy of the Bentley edition, 1833 (Gilson Dl), in contemporary half calf, somewhat worn, and lacking the advertisements and frontispiece. It was estimated at $200-$300 and the hammer price, which, thanks to the wonders of email, I have been able to ascertain, was $250. Another copy, in the original first style binding of the Standard Novels series, was part of Lot 498

in the Dominic Winter sale on 4 October. The entire Lot (which comprised twelve of the Standard Novels series, including all the Jane Austen titles except *Pride and Prejudice)* was estimated at £100-£150 but realised £880. James Burmester offered in his Catalogue 48 (Item 16) a copy for £400. This had the series half-title and was bound in the original plum-coloured cloth with black and gilt labels. Jarndyce had a copy in their Catalogue 137 (Item 71). In this one the original *plum*-coloured cloth was fading to brown on the spine. The series title and four inserted pages of advertisements were present. The price was £450. The Carey and Lea edition, Philadelphia, 1833 (Gilson B6), was offered by Peter L Stern of Boston, Mass. in a collection of the editions produced by that publisher, lacking only the American version of *Pride and Prejudice (Elizabeth Bennet).* Each novel was bound in the original cloth-backed boards and the price was $75,000 for the whole set (about £45,000). For details of this sale I am indebted to David Gilson for sending me a print-out from the internet description sent to him by Patricia Latkin. Item 72 in Jarndyce's Catalogue 137 was the 1837 printing of Bentley's 1833 edition, bound in full red calf by Hayday, for £300.

Pride and Prejudice

The Sotheby sale of 19 December offered, at Lot 72, a copy of the first edition, 1813 (Gilson A3), like the *Sense and Sensibility,* mentioned above, formerly owned by Lord Gray and similarly bound in contemporary half calf, gilt, with red morocco labels. The half-titles were present and this too exceeded its estimate (£7,000-£10,000) by realising a staggering *£55,450.* Exceptional prices prevailed throughout this particular sale, which also included the archive and library of Dorothy Sayers. A copy of the third edition, 1817 (Gilson AS), was included in Lot 197 at the Christie's, New York, sale on 12 April, mentioned above. It had the half-titles and a few early annotations. Bloomsbury Book Auctions held an online auction from 30 June – 9 July where Lot 1 was a copy of the same edition, estimated at $2,100 – $2,300, but no details given. I did not see the original announcement of this sale but am indebted to Deirdre Le Faye for sending me the print-out from *Thesaurus,* the search service to which the Society now subscribes. Bloomsbury tell me that the copy was not wonderful and failed to sell. The Bentley Standard Novels edition, 1833 (Gilson D5) was Item 61 in Jarndyce's Catalogue 137, lacking the half-title and bound in later half dark green calf, for *£450.* Item 62 in the same catalogue was the 1846 printing of Bentley's Standard Novels vol. 30 (Gilson D7). This had the series title, was handsomely rebound in half blind-tooled calf and was priced at £350.

Mansfield Park

Lot 539 in Christie's sale of William Foyle's library, part 3, 12-13 July, was a copy of the first edition, 1814 (Gilson A6). With the half-titles, but lacking the final blank in vol. 2 and the advertisement leaf in vol. 3, the set was bound in 20th century crimson crushed morocco gilt by Sangorski and Sutcliffe. It suffered from variable spotting and had some clean tears, that to signature D12 in vol. 3

being skilfully repaired. Estimated at £2,000-£3,000, the copy fetched £4,800. Lot 70 in the Sotheby sale on 19 December was another copy, also an item from Lord Gray's library. This had the half-titles, the final blank at the end of vol. 2 and the advertisement leaf at the end of vol.3. It was bound in 19th century half calf. Estimated at £3,000-£4,000 this fetched £12,900. The second edition, 1816 (Gilson A7), with half-titles, was part of Lot 197 in the Christie's, New York, sale on 12 April. The Carey and Lea edition, Philadelphia 1832 (Gilson B4), was part of the set offered by Peter L Stern. James Burmester's Catalogue 48 offered (Item 14) the Bentley Standard Novels edition, 1833 (Gilson D3), with the series half-title and in the original plum-coloured cloth. The price was £300. Another copy was Item 158 in Ian Hodgkins's Catalogue 108, in half tan calf with splitting hinges, half-title not mentioned, priced at £220. This edition also appeared in the Dominic Winter sale on 4 October, mentioned above. Jarndyce had two copies in their Catalogue 137. Item 52 (£300) had the original plum cloth fading to brown; Item 53 (£380) was in contemporary half dark blue calf. Both had the series titles; Item 52 also had the four leaves of advertisements.

Emma

The first edition, 1816 (Gilson A8), lacking half-titles, was part of Lot 197 at Christie's, New York, on 12 April. Lot 69 at Sotheby's on 19 December was another copy. This was not from Lord Gray's collection (unlike the *Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* mentioned above) but had the contemporary ownership inscription on the front endpapers of B. Ormston. With the half-titles and the final blank to vol. 1 and bound in the original grey-brown paper boards with white labels printed in black (virtually intact, which is unusual), the set was estimated at £7,000-£10,000 and realised £25,550. The Standard Novels edition, Bentley 1833 (Gilson D2), was part of Lot 498 in the Dominic Winter sale on 4 October. Another copy was offered by James Burmester in his Catalogue 48 (Item 13), with the series title and in the original plum-coloured cloth, for £400. Jarndyce also had a copy (Item 47 in catalogue 137), again in the plum cloth, for £300. The second American edition, Philadelphia, Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1833, was part of the set offered by Peter L Stern.

Northanger Abbey and Persuasion

Lot 163 at the Bloomsbury Book Auction on 9 March comprised vols. 3 and 4 only of the first edition, 1818 (Gilson A9) – i.e. *Persuasion* only. In contemporary half calf, rubbed and with the upper board of vol. 3 detached and lacking the half-titles this set, estimated at £600-£800, sold for £747. It bore the signatures of Jane Barnard. Lot 197 at Christie's, New York, on 12 April was a complete set, lacking the half-titles and with signatures C and D in vol. 4 misbound. Dominic Winter had a copy similar to that sold at the Bloomsbury sale (again vols. 3 and 4 only) at their sale on 10 May. This was also bound in contemporary half calf, very worn, the boards detached and the backstrips almost wholly missing and lacked the half-titles. It was estimated at £200-£300 but sold for only £220. Lot 540 in part 3

of the Christie sale of William Foyle' s library, 12-13 July, was a complete copy, the four volumes bound in two in twentieth century crimson crushed morocco by Sangorski and Sutcliffe. A rather confused description recorded that the half and fly-titles were present, going on to say that the half-title to vol. 2 was misbound after the title and that the half-titles for vols. 2-4 were lacking. Perhaps the cataloguer meant vols. 3-4. The final blanks to vol. 4 were also lacking. A partially erased marginal inscription gave the provenance as ?C. H. Suffield. The estimate was £1,500-£2,000 and the hammer price £3,200. Lot 119 at the Phillips sale in Bath on 9 October was a copy with all four half-titles, two of them misbound, with light browning and offsetting, bound in neatly rebacked 19th century calf and with a bookplate removed from the inner front cover. The estimate was £2,000-£3,000 and the hammer price £4,000. *Thesaurus* reported a copy at Sotheby's, New York, on 13 December (Lot 7), estimated at $3,000-$5,000; this fetched $3,000. Another copy was in the Sotheby sale on 19 December, at Lot 68. Like the copy of *Emma* at the same sale this was in the original grey-brown paper boards with white labels printed in black and virtually intact. Estimated at £6,000-£9,000, this copy realised £22,100. Item 10 in Maggs's catalogue 1288 was a copy in contemporary calf, recently rebacked, lacking the half-title to vol. 1 and the final blanks to vol. 4. Bookplates in each volume recorded the previous owners, Mary Anne Robb and Alfred H. J. Cochrane. The price was £5,500. (This copy was in my last report, at the same price.) The Bentley Standard Novels edition, 1833 (Gilson D4) was part of Lot 498 in the Dominic Winter sale on 4 October. James Burmester's Catalogue 48 (Item 15) had a copy for £400, in the original plum cloth, with the series half-title. Jarndyce, in their Catalogue 137 (Item *56),* had a copy in the original cloth with the booklabel of Sarah Johnson, series half-title and the initial 24 page catalogue, for £450. The Carey and Lea edition, Philadelphia 1833 (Gilson BS) was part of the set offered by Peter L Stern.

Persuasion

The Philadelphia edition by Carey and Lea, 1832 (Gilson B3) was part of the set offered by Peter L Stern. Item 2 in Quaritch's Catalogue 1280 was described as 'only the third copy known' of the first German translation – *Anna. Ein Familiengemählde.* Leipzig, 1822 (Gilson C14). David Gilson records his discovery of the 'so far unique copy' of this translation in the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in the preface to his *Bibliography* (1982). Since then another copy has been located at the Landesbibliothek Schwerin by the compilers of an online German bibliography, KVK. This is the *Karlsruhe Virtueller Katalog.* For those with access to the web the URL may be helpful *(http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/kvk.html).* A copy recorded in the 1834 and 1839 printed catalogues of the library of the Studenterforeningen, Copenhagen is, as noted in Gilson, no longer to be found in that collection, which is now in Odense University Library. The translator was Wilhelm Adolf Lindau, a prolific writer who made his name with translations of Scott; this was his only translation of Jane Austen. The copy offered by Quaritch bore the 19th century signature of R. Robbel. It included the advertisements and the half-title to vol. 2

and was bound in contemporary tree marbled boards. Its rarity was reflected in the price of £8,500.

Collected editions

All five volumes of the first collected edition by Bentley, 1833 (Gilson D6), formed Item 4 in the Bow windows Catalogue 156. Lacking half-titles and the two pages of advertisements in vol. 4, the set was bound in modern period style red morocco with marbled sides and endpapers. The price was £2,750. Vol. 2 only of this edition *(Pride and Prejudice)* was Item 165 in Ian Hodgkins's Catalogue 108 – wrongly described as vol. 2 of the Standard Novels series (an error to which some booksellers appear to be prone). Lacking the half-title, rebound in modern cloth-backed boards and with a soiled and worn backstrip this was priced at £280. It reappeared as Item 19 in the same bookseller's Catalogue 110 at the same price.

Other material

Item 19 in Richard Budd's Catalogue *52* was vol. 24 of *The Quarterly Review,* Jan. 1821. This contained Richard Whately's anonymous review of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion,* originally attributed to Sir Walter Scott, who had reviewed *Emma* for vol. 14 of the same journal in 1815. The price was *£45.* Jarndyce's Catalogue 137 had (Item 77) a copy of the first edition of James Edward Austen-Leigh's *Memoir,* 1870 (Gilson Ml *25)* for £150. The copy came from Goodnestone Park and bore the signature of E. FitzWalter. Ian Hodgkins's Catalogue 110 offered again the original drawing for the Charles Edmund Brock illustration for *Persuasion* mentioned in last year's report – 'We had a famous set-to at rat hunting'. The price remained the same, *£825.* Item 9 in the same catalogue was an original ink and water colour illustration by Henry Matthew Brock for the edition of *Mansfield Park* published by Dent in 1898. Entitled 'He could not help giving Mrs Norris a hint', it depicted Sir Thomas Bertram pointing a finger and leaning towards Mrs Norris, seated by a sewing table. The price was *£750.* The Bonhams sale on 8 December 1999 (missed from my last report) had, at Lot 992, an ink drawing by Hugh Thomson for the 1897 Macmillan edition of the same novel (Gilson E88). Captioned in pencil 'Both advised Mrs Norris's continuing where she was', it showed Mrs Norris trying to ignore the advice of Edmund Bertram and his father to let Fanny and William Price greet each other in private. The estimate was £200-£300 and it sold for £300. The drawing subsequently turned up as Item 161 in Ian Hodgkins's Catalogue 108, the price being now *£850.* Finally, although there is no evidence that it really belongs in this report, I must mention the 'Friendship Book' compiled by the Revd James Stanier Clarke (the Prince Regent's Librarian, who showed Jane Austen round Carlton House in 1815). This is offered on the web by Richard James Wheeler of the Artworks Gallery in Sevenoaks, and a full description can still (19 April) be seen on his most attractive site *(http://www.artworksgallery.co.uklbook.html).* Members who watch the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow* may recall seeing this item shown to the experts on 14 May, where the valuation was £3,000-£4,000. The manuscript

is full of delightful watercolours, verses and autographs of well-known persons such as George Romney and Charlotte Smith and includes a pasted-in portrait of an elegantly dressed young lady in an enormous hat, which Mr Wheeler says is of Jane Austen, painted by Mr Clarke on the occasion of her visit. There has, I understand, been some controversy about the accuracy of this statement and the portrait bears little resemblance to Cassandra's watercolour in the National Portrait Gallery, about which Mr Wheeler is rather dismissive. Cassandra's portrait may be unflattering but it does at any rate show a striking likeness to the 1801 miniature of Jane Austen's father, reproduced by, among other writers, Irene Collins in her *Jane Austen and the clergy,* 1994 (plate 4). The likeness is not apparent so far as one can see in the watercolour on offer, but as the arguments have, I believe, been well rehearsed in the columns of the *TLS* I will not repeat them here. The price is not given on the website but I believe it is reported to be in the region of £185,000, presumably based on the premise that the portrait is authentic. It does not yet, however, appear to have been sold.

Still at Number Seven

Joanna Trollope

On World Book Day last year – 10 March – a poll was carried out among 40,000 readers and published in the *Daily Telegraph* to discover the nation's all-time fifty favourite writers. You might say that 40,000 isn't very many out of a population of 58 million, and that a poll which rates Enid Blyton above Thomas Hardy doesn't say much for any nation – but the results were, nonetheless, interesting.

Out of the first six slots, four were occupied by children's, or adolescents' authors – Roald Dahl, J.K. Rowling, Terry Pratchett and Jacqueline Wilson. This says as much about children's persuasive power over parental pockets as it does about the merits of the authors themselves. Places four and six were taken by Catherine Cookson and Maeve Binchy, both admirable, excellent, and likeable writers who would, I think, be – in Dame Catherine's case, of course, would have been – far too realistic to claim literary greatness for themselves in the vast historical scheme of things.

And then, at number seven, came Jane Austen, way ahead of the other writers of her century. Dickens came in at 13, Hardy at 19, no mention whatsoever of George Eliot or the Brontës or Trollope or Thackeray. Shakespeare scraped in at 50. A poll like this does of course provide erratic results, and displays the shortness of people's memories and their disinclination, in harried lives, to set themselves any mental challenges outside work, but it is none the less important, if for no other reason than that it mirrors not just book sales, but library borrowings. Therefore, in the fin de siècle year of the twentieth century, not so many fewer people were buying and borrowing Jane Austen than were buying and borrowing Harry Potter. It is an impressive thought.

It is also one, I think, which makes us consider the concept of popularity. Literally, of course, the word simply means 'of the people'. By extension it means 'pleasing to, enjoying the favour of, or prevailing among, the people', and even further, 'suited to the understanding of the people' and, in consequence, 'liked by one's associates, liked by the people'. It shouldn't, I think, be confused with 'populism', a word originating from the States in the late nineteenth century, and denoting membership of the People's Party which advocated the public ownership of public services and which has become debased to mean an unprincipled currying of favour for doubtful and short term ends.

In the world of serious literature, the word popular is mistrusted. It seems to indicate some kind of vulgarity, some kind of stooping to please, some form of compromise in standards to achieve widespread sales and vociferous, if worthless, acclaim. It's in vain to point out that the Parthenon is actually pretty popular, as are the symphonies of Beethoven and Mozart, and that popularity does not inevitably mean the venal surrendering of high standards. There remains a lofty anxiety that if you are accessible as a writer, you can't actually be writing the real thing.

But then there is Jane Austen. A writer not only more widely read than ever, but with only this tiny body of work; about whom readers seem to feel more violently possessive than they do about any other. A writer film and television can't seem to leave alone. A writer that teenagers start on and find that they are still re-reading five or six decades later. A writer who wrote, by her own admission, on a miniature scale both socially and geographically, and who never even attempted what Trollope called Tolstoy's 'landscape of grand passion'. A writer who dealt, on the surface anyway, with decorousness and drawing rooms and details, stories set among people for whom a girl walking in the rain without a cloak could be a matter of serious, household-upsetting, alarm and concern. What *is* it, then, about Jane Austen that has generations of readers not only so devoted but fighting to be the one who understands and appreciates her most? What *is* it in fact, that constitutes her abiding and extraordinary popularity?

The first element, I think, is this matter of narrative. It is a grave mistake to despise story, to suppose that story is somehow infantile, that the business of what happened next is not sufficiently sophisticated for the adult mind. Story, if you consider it, is the means by which we explain ourselves to one another. All relationships, personal or professional, are built up by means of exchange of anecdote: anecdote that reveals us to one another, that explains construction of character, patterns of thinking, accumulations of experience. Of all stories, of course, the story of our own lives is one of infinite absorption and drama to every one of us – it may look banal from the outside, but we, the central character, know full well that it is in reality like the last act of *Hamlet*.

Jane Austen knew this full well. From the relative simplicity of plot in *Northanger Abbey* to the almost detective story complexity of *Emma*, she draws us in to the story, into the sense – the very vivid sense – that what happened next was of crucial importance to her characters. She was perfectly well aware of true banality – where would Mrs Norris have come from, if she hadn't been? – but she also knew that the internal drama and tension of the next narrative move was something to be encouraged, not despised.

Nothing in the books that happens is, in the great scheme of things, new. There is no human situation that Sophocles or Shakespeare hasn't masterfully described already. But what a great writer has is the capacity to make the shock of an emotional commonplace, happening to a character for the first time, feel like a real shock. Emotional or sexual betrayal may be as mundane as Monday and as old as the hills, but the first time it happens to *you*, is the first time in the history of the world. Thus we feel the impotent anguish of Anne Elliot's supposing Captain Wentworth to be in love with Louisa Musgrove or Fanny Price's being faced with Edmund Bertram's infatuation with Mary Crawford. The anguish needs to be resolved, we need to see the impeccable young women released from the injustice of being made prisoners of jealousy. The story is driven along by these needs of ours; they are why we turn the pages.

But why should we need to know? Why should we care about these white-handed women in spotted muslin taking turns in shrubberies – weather permitting

– or spending whole mornings choosing bonnet ribbons and whole evenings singing at the piano or making filigree baskets? Leave aside our fascination, from our pressured, hurried, uncivilised twenty-first century standpoint, with a series of lives as seemingly elegant and leisured and waited upon as the ones in these novels. Look beyond the carriages and bonnets and servants and private incomes and you will see the second reason for Jane Austen's abiding popularity: the characterisation.

I don't mean by this, however, the 'characters' in inverted commas. I don't mean Miss Bates and Mrs Elton and Mrs Jennings and Mrs Bennet and Mrs Norris – notice how few *men* there are in this roll call? – Mrs Clay and Mr Collins and Sir Walter Elliot; I mean the people for whom we are required to care, to be concerned about, to wish earnestly for either a resolution of their dilemma or – especially in the case of the men – that they be enlightened of their folly. If these people – Emma Woodhouse, Anne Elliot, Elinor Dashwood, for example – are children of their time in terms of manner and dress and absorption in codes of conduct, they are both timeless and universal in their hopes and fears. A broken heart is a broken heart in the twelfth century or the twentieth; in Tokyo or Toronto or Torquay. And because Jane Austen treats us so respectfully and equally as readers – for example she would never expect us to see Marianne Dashwood's adolescent infatuation with being in love in the same light as Anne Elliot's adult understanding of the true nature of romantic love – we come to stand alongside her and to appreciate true human worth, true human folly and true human treachery, all as essentially the same for her time as for ours.

The word treachery is significant. Jane Austen is often accused of comforting her readers too much, of shielding them from the horrors and squalors of her time: hardly a mention of the Napoleonic Wars except as a useful source of prize money in *Persuasion* and *Mansfield Park;* no mention at all of riots or madhouses or drunkenness (except comically, once, with Mr Elton) or public hangings or press gangs or the fact that life expectancy, in the sort of circles poor Fanny Price came from owing to her mother's short-lived and misguided propensity for a sailor, was not much above 30. Her times were, to a far greater degree than ours, violent and brutal, but the accusation of ducking reality by not describing the blackest elements openly, seems to me an irrelevance. These matters were for other pens than hers because hers was designed for the depiction of another kind of beastliness, a kind that is less operatic and apocalyptic to behold, but often more pernicious in its effect upon humanity's capacity to suffer – and that is human treachery, and most especially, the treachery of women.

Post-the women's movement, this may not be an acceptable point to make, but it needs making. Jane Austen was all for women occupying the moral high ground, but she felt, quite properly, that they had to *earn* their position there. She also makes a clear distinction between the insensitive blunt instruments like Lydia Bennet or Miss Steele or Julia Bertram and those whose aim is to out-manoeuvre and win, at whatever cost to dearest, *dearest* friends about whose waists their arms are entwined at this very moment – Lucy Steele, Caroline Bingley, Isabella Thorpe. And

then, because she is such a realist, she does not flinch from those who are traitors and are clever enough to know they are and even to wish themselves otherwise – Mary Crawford, Maria Bertram. The manoeuvrings of the women especially, the extraordinary games played with feelings and social insult – *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* are masterpieces of these – are only the forbears, in more stately language, of precisely the games played now, particularly among women, in homes and offices and clubs and are recognised as such by these legions of loyal modern readers. Jane Austen may not be a social historian – she never wished or pretended to be – but she is a chronicler of humanity. Her characters are flawed; we want to slap them as often as we want to hug them and in that reality lies their enduring effect upon us: namely, that we *recognise* them.

In his autobiography, Anthony Trollope said a great deal that was cantankerous, failed to say anything about vital aspects of his life, such as his marriage, and succeeded in saying a few truly memorable things. Two of these things apply most precisely to this aspect of characterisation that has given Jane Austen so much of her enduring appeal.

The first was that the novelist has an extraordinary power. 'Nobody,' said Trollope, 'gets closer to a reader than a novelist. Not even his *mother*.' The novel, you see, can be the confessional. The novel, that small companionable object which you can literally curl up with so privately, can be the place of admission, the recipient of confidence. In the face of Fanny Price's humiliations; Emma's realisation that she may have lost the one thing she wants through her own fault; Lizzie Bennet's dawning regard for a man prepared, impressively, to change for her; Elinor Dashwood's extraordinary self-disciplined suffering; Anne Elliot's loss of feelings of self-worth – in all these situations, even if they deal solely in romantic love and not, say, in maternal or filial or friendship love, a chance is offered to admit similarity, to surrender the isolating sense of being alone in a particular pain, to know oneself part of the human pattern and not miserably excluded from it.

Which brings me to Trollope's second point. He and Tolstoy were mutually huge admirers of one another – Tolstoy is said to have leapt from his daybed having finished *The Prime Minister,* shouting 'Trollope *kills* me with his excellence!' And perhaps Trollope was thinking of Tolstoy when he commented, in his autobiography, that his business as a novelist was not the world of great passion but rather 'to chronicle those little daily lacerations upon the spirit.' This, of course, is the stuff of lasting popularity. This observance of the stoicism people display, the minute missiles of inconvenience and hassle and misunderstanding and disappointment that assail all of us every day of our lives – now, *that* is the stuff of fiction, of this mirror held up to humanity, *that* is what keeps us reading, keeps us feeling that we are not alone, that we have not, somehow, failed to do things properly, get the hang of it all.

Jane Austen is often described as a comic writer. Well, she is, in the purest academic description, and if the only alternative is the opposite pole of tragic. The novels certainly have happy endings – left at the altar, you notice, with no venturing forward into the post-elation period of married life – and they certainly are full of

comic characters and comic scenes. But they are also fall of pain. Not huge public pain like the battlefield of Borodino or Dickens's starveling slum children, but the acute, keen, scalpel-edged hurt of private pain, the kind known to every man, woman and child who has ever walked this earth, irrespective of being dressed like Mr Knightley or Tony Blair. So much, in these novels, hangs upon so little and that little must never be made overt. There were so few chances for these women especially, so many frightening opportunities for both men and women to slip into a kind of degradation and poverty almost impossible today. The sunlit world of the shrubbery at Hartfield, the park at Mansfield, the river at Pemberley, is so desirable but – she makes it plain – open to so few. Her world is as fragile as ours, if for different reasons and in different ways. The imperative for money was inflexible, the need for respectability – especially female – absolute, the choices for clever, accomplished, civilised people terrifyingly few. She knew it all and she knew too how terror of failure and *fall* made people behave badly. It doesn't change. It never will. We read Jane Austen 200 years after her death because we know she knows. She is exceptional but that doesn't stop her *being one of us.*

I want to end where I came in, with the World Book Day poll. If you look again at those first seven places, it isn't perhaps unfair to regard the children's books as being in a separate category, not because of quality of writing, but because of the particular emotional circumstances in which children's books are bought – some, certainly, by children themselves, but most by parents. Equally, it isn't unjust or unkind maybe to suggest that Catherine Cookson and Maeve Binchy may rate tremendous affection but will not prove to have the enduring power to sustain their places in centuries to come. So, with those caveats, we can perhaps just gently put the first six contenders to one side, with honour and appreciation, and reveal – if time and quality and affection and admiration and sheer popularity have anything to do with it – that Jane Austen is where most of us believe she should be: at number one.

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JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORTS: 1949-2000

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NOTES: Reports for 1949-1965 = volume I; 1966-1975 = volume II; 1976-1985 = volume III; 1986-1995 = volume IV; 1996-2000 = volume V.
In order to assist in identifying the many names in the index, qualification (shown in parenthesis) is sometimes used after a name to indicate a person's occupation or status: e.g., (donor), indicates a person who has loaned, gifted or bequeathed items to the Society.
The title of a contribution is shown within "double quotation marks", followed by the contributor's surname in brackets.
Textual errors have been amended in the index: e.g., Bennett to Bennet; Knightly to Knightley; Burgh to Bourgh etc.
Abbreviations for major novels follow the accepted convention: e.g., E=Emma, MP=Mansfield Park, NA=Northanger Abbey, P=Persuasion, P&P=Pride and Prejudice, S&S=Sense and Sensibility. Others are JA=Jane Austen; JAH=Jane Austen's House.
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